

유성 게임 판타지 장편 소설
ROK GAME FANTASY STORY



아크
더
ARK THE LEGEND
레전드

ARK THE LEGEND

BOOK 12

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Ark the Legend

(아크 더 레전드)

by
Yoo Seong

Synopsis

A new game which the nation has dived into.

From the bloody battlefields to the pyramids of ancient times, head into the colourful world of Galaxian.

The glorious days of the legendary gamer Ark is over.

From finding a job to saving the party from a humiliating death, nothing is easily solved.....

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Space 1: Bug?

SPACE 1. Bug?

“Are you listening?”

A sharp voice rang out in the office.

The grey haired man inwardly sighed while looking through his papers. And he looked up towards a woman sitting down on the couch. The woman was the embodiment of money as she wore expensive clothes and jewellery. She was his daughter.

The man stroked his face with his hand and asked.

“What did you want to talk about?”

“I told you! I was insulted by Min-sun. In front of my man! Doesn’t Dad understand? Park Eun-chan is the youngest son of Central Hotel. Yet she dare do such things in front of Eun-chan!”

“What did Min-sun do?”

“I was blindsided by the man she was with and his two friends.”

“Man? Min-sin was with a man?”

The man’s eyes finally showed the first signs of interest. And Cho Mi-ra clamoured even more enthusiastically.

“Yes, he was a dumb looking man. And a complete bully. I accidentally spilled some water on Min-sun but he couldn’t let it go and threatened me. There were also a lot of people in the dining room. He might be a real criminal. No, he must be one. He has that look in his eyes. Why else would he go for a girl like

Min-sun?"

"So, what specifically did they do?"

"Is that important?"

Cho Mi-ra frowned while looking at her father.

"Me! Father's daughter! They humiliated me in front of all those people!"

"Min-sun is also my daughter. And your younger sister."

"I don't have a younger sister!"

"You are my daughter but you can't change that fact. You're 25 years old so shouldn't you know that by now? Don't visit your father's workplace and tell me about a quarrel between sisters. I don't have the time to listen to such talk."

Cho Mi-ra cooled down at her father's words. She bit her lip and muttered in a cold voice.

".....Are you saying I'm troublesome?"

"That isn't what I'm saying."

"Yes, you do that. I understand. Then I'll disappear."

Cho Mi-ra stood up and grabbed her handbag before crying out.

"And I'm 27!"

Moon So-ri heard her rough voice.

However, his face didn't change as he looked at the thick pile of paperwork. His eyes just mechanically looked over another form. But after a moment, he hit the button on his intercom and said.

"Secretary Choi, are you there?"

-Yes, President-nim. Please say your request.

“There is a man who met with Min-sun. Find out about that guy.”

‘.....What?’

Ark was baffled. Right now Ark was surrounded by darkness. His eyes were open but it was so dark that he questioned whether they were really open. The silence even made him doubt his eardrums. In other words, he couldn’t see or hear anything.

A person who knew would understand. How much this made a person choked up. However the darkness and silence wasn’t what confused Ark. Rather, it was that he couldn’t understand where this place was and why he was here. In this world, there was no effect without a cause!

‘Yes, something unexpected might’ve happened but there is a reason for it. If I think calmly then I might be able to obtain some hints or information. So let’s go through my memory step by step. Then.....’

Ark pressed the ‘▷’ button and played the memory in his head. The situation floated before him.

—Now there is no time. The key to a surprise attack is speed! Don’t give them time to think! Each team will enter the passage and exterminate the enemy! If there is danger then use the communicator! Advance!—

Shortly after the investigation team landed on the grey planet. Hawk had separated the team and ordered them to advance into the underground base.

.....He had gone too far.

‘No! The necessary scene isn’t here!’

Ark pressed the ‘▷▷’ and his memory accelerated forward. The underground facility passed like a kaleidoscope.

Ferguson slaughtered the herd of frogs and they managed to arrive at the centre of the facility. Then Ark heard some shocking words from Irina. The self-destruct device had already been activated when Ark arrived at the centre and Hawk knew but bullied Ark by only escaped with the other team members. No, it wasn't just bullying. He packed the entrance with explosives in order to trap Ark's group in the control room.

'Hawk, that damn bastard!'

He couldn't even curse right now.

Anyway, Hawk's plan was stopped by Ark's superior judgement. In his desperate moment, Ark was able to find a secret passage in the control room and escape just before the base exploded. But the situation didn't end there. The base's self-destruct device was connected to the core of the Castle and the grey planet started to collapse and form a black hole.

Ark was caught up in the black hole's gravity. However Ark had a hidden move.

Kwa kwak! Kwa kwak! Kwa kwak! Kwa kwak!

He launched an anchor into Hawk's ship and held on! It was the anchor launcher installed when the Silver Star was being repaired on E-2036.

—You bastard! What are you doing?

'Hawk's expression then was so confused.....'

Just imagining the scene again caused endorphins to rush. However there was also Ferguson.

Kwa kwak! Kwa kwak! Kwa kwak! Kwa kwak!

A special anchor!

—Ark! You bastard, you relaxed all day at the base only to strand me here? I

have a 2nd grade ship so my engine output is weak! Look! I won't be able to live if another ship is destroyed! Save me!

This time Ferguson anchored himself to Ark's ship. Ferguson.....he really had the intelligence of an ape.

Needless to say, Ark had anchored himself to Hawk in order to live. If he grabbed onto Hawk's Death Knight then Ark would've surely escaped from the black hole's gravity. He was convinced about it and didn't look for another way.

But Ferguson wasn't thinking at all. Just like a drowning man would catch anything, he grabbed onto Ark and wouldn't let go. In the end, everyone would die because he wanted to live.

'Damn! I hope he is hit by a garbage truck and dies!'

Ark and Hawk's detailed plans for each other were crushed by Ferguson who the IQ of a monkey. And then the worst situation occurred.

-I can't control the Silver Star!

-3D coordinates calculation error! Balance systems error! On-board gravity generator error! Thanks to the collision with the gravity and magnetic fields, all engine systems have errors! It is impossible to control!

-There is no way to escape the gravitational field!

-Ugh! I don't want to die!

Hegel and Tori screamed from the bridge!

However the opponent was the strongest predator in the universe, a black hole. Even with the scientific power of the 24th century, it was impossible to unravel all its mysteries. Now it had captured Ark. And the Silver Star was finally swallowed by the black hole.

-You have died.

That message popped in front of him.

No, that message should've popped in front of him. That's why Ark was confused. He had been swallowed by darkness and waited for the message to appear.

'The black hole is an existence that sucks in everything. Not even light can be seen here. If I'm stuck in a black hole and my soul wasn't returned to a Fairy.....'

A sinister thought entered his head. However Ark shook his head.

'It is impossible. Either way, this is still a game. There shouldn't be any bugs to lock a user's resurrection. So what is this situation? Perhaps....I haven't died yet.....'

".....Character Information Window."

Ark muttered dubiously.

| Character Information Window | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Name | Ark (R-02788) | Level | 137 |
| Species | Human | Occupation | Elim's Heir |
| Fame | 11,730 | Adventure | 1,590 |
| Health | 3,350 | Mental Power | 600 |
| Mana | 0 | Force | 1,825 |
| Strength | 330 (+20) | Agility | 375 (+20) |
| Stamina | 555 | Wisdom | 40 |
| Intelligence | 350 | Luck | 55 |
| * Title | | | |

Cleaning Foreman (Agility + 3)

Ignorant Destroyer (Wisdom -10, Strength +7,
Stamina +7)

Beltana's Hero (Strength, Agility, Stamina, Wisdom,
Intelligence, Luck +3)

Athamas' Hero (Strength, Agility, Stamina, Wisdom,
Intelligence, Luck +5)

Mediator (Wisdom, Intelligence +15)

* Contribution: Galactic Federation 19,520, Aschulat
500

* Affiliation: Dark Eden (CEO)

*Body Coating: Survivor

+ Environmental adaptation increases by 50% due
to the Survivor coating.

+ The Survivor coating reduces the drop rate of
Satiety by 30%.

+ The Survivor coating will reduce fall damage by

50%.

+The 'Clairvoyance' effect of the Survivor coating is applied.

'Eh? R-really?'

Ark's eyes were shocked. The character information window he hoped for had surfaced.

He was still level 137. It was the same level from before he was sucked into the black hole. He had been level 133 when he registered at the Fairy so it meant he hadn't died!

However, Ark soon sensed something strange.

His level and stats were clearly the same from before he was sucked into the black hole. However, the character information window didn't just display his level and stats. It also showed his equipment in the form of stat (+α). Yet that wasn't there anymore.

Aside from the +20 attached to strength and agility, the other effects of his equipment had disappeared.

'Don't tell me? Huk! W-what is this?'

-Equipment Information Window-

Weapons: <Heir's Sword>

Armour: <Elim's Helmet>

Accessories: –

‘My accessories are gone?’

Ark’s face paled after seeing the equipment information window.

His armour, boots, the unique Belphegor’s pants he just obtained and even the Baius Shield was gone? The only things remaining were his Heir’s Sword and Elim’s Helmet! It was worst then when he started Galaxian because he was completely exposed. No, his appearance didn’t matter.

What about his accessories? He had been collecting his equipment one by one over the past few months with much difficulty. They were worth at least 1,000 gold and the Baius Sword was necessary to change class as Elim’s Heir. Compared to the value of those equipment, he would rather die and revive 100 times. But the equipment more precious than life were gone.

That wasn’t all that disappeared. Even the basic japtém stored in his backpack and Nymphé were gone.

‘Oh my god! This is ridiculous! My backpack full of items and Nymphé have disappeared as well? I’d rather die! Bug! Yes, this is obviously a bug! Damn, is there really a bug this ridiculous? I’m going to protest to the game publisher! If they don’t restore my items then I’ll sue!’

While he was thinking.....

‘Wait? This might surprisingly be a chance!’

Ark’s eyes glistened after a moment.

In fact, one of the reasons Ark despaired when sucked into the black hole wasn’t because of his death. The death penalty for a user wasn’t that much. Of course, his level would drop and maybe even an item depending on the damage

but it wasn't cause for despair.

The pioneer NPCs could also be resurrected like users. However, it was different when talking about non-pioneer NPCs. If they died it was the end. The subordinate he raised with hard work would be lost once they died. Two such employees were riding on the Silver Star.

Tori and Ellain.

'If we're sucked into a black hole then it is over for Tori and Ellain. I will also lose the Silver Star.'

Of course, the Silver Star was insured.

However, he could only get back 80% of the price with the insurance. If a 10,000 gold spaceship was lost then he would only receive 8,000 gold compensation. The user would lose the remaining 2,000 gold.

There was also the ship's lost cargo, upgrades and additional equipment that wasn't covered. Once someone lost a ship, there would be thousands of gold lost despite the insurance.

'.....But if it is caused by a bug?'

He could bring this situation to the publisher.

It was Ark's fault that he was sucked into the black hole but the current trouble was due to a bug. He might be able to recover the Silver Star as well as his team members. No, he would do it. Ark worked for a virtual reality game publisher so he knew the details. If he persisted tenaciously then he could receive compensation for the bug.

"Yes! This is great! I will press this!"

Ark had just made his decision.

Buuuuong!

Something was heard in the darkness. Ark flinched and raised his head. He had forgotten the current situation while lost in memories.

Ark wasn't the only one sucked in the black hole. Not only was there Hawk and Ferguson's ship, there were the team members on his ship like Rapid, Kaya, Tori, Hegel etc. If the bug dropped Ark into this place then it was likely that the Silver Star and his team members were scattered around here somewhere.

'If the other team members also bring up the bug then it will be easier to receive compensation.'

"Hey! Anyone there? I am Ark."

He shouted with a loud voice.

Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu!

Gunshots suddenly rang out! Three or four bullets went through his side and thighs.

-You were shot in a defenceless state and suffered a critical blow!

A red message popped up with the throbbing pain!

"Ugh! What, what the?"

Ark cried out at the unexpected circumstances and cried out. At the same time, an idea crossed his head.

'I clearly said my name. My team wouldn't shoot blindly away after hearing that. And I'm convinced this space was made by a bug so it can't be monsters. The only person who might shoot me in this place.....'

They were drawn into the black hole together. There were one among them who would shoot when hearing Ark's name!

"Hawk's group! Is that you?"

Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu!

Bullets came flying over again instead of a reply. In fact, he hadn't expected an answer to his questions. It didn't matter if they were Hawk or Hawk's subordinates. The second shooting made it clear they had a partner. It wasn't just one bastard. Projectiles were flying from three different directions!

'I can't just die in this bugged space!'

Ark rolled his body and avoided the bullets. He automatically raised his body in an attack stance but just turned around in vain.

He didn't realize it until now but his body felt incredibly heavy when he moved. It felt like dozens of iron nuggets worth a few kilograms were hanging all over his body. Ark moved as slow as a slug for a few metres and was already breathing like he ran a marathon.

'Huk! What, what the? This weight?'

Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu!

But the opponents just mercilessly poured out bullets. Ark rolled on the ground again but avoiding all the bullets was impossible. Unless it was a critical hit, the damage from a bullet was less than that of a sword. That's because by default, all armour in Galaxian had a bulletproof feature attached to them. However, that was when the armour was equipped. Unfortunately Ark was naked so he had X and XX parts exposed.

-2,530....2,475.....2,383.....

He was being shot at from three directions so he quickly lost 1,000 health. That wasn't the only damage. Without armour the bullets were three or four

times stronger. It was enough to cause a tingling pain every time the bullet hit him. If the bullets hit a sensitive area like his neck or XX then he would scream!

“Awook! Awook! Holy shit! Armour armament!”

Ark immediately called his battle suit. But the expected battle suit didn't come out.

‘Dammit! My battle suit is also gone? Indeed, it isn't strange for my battle suit to disappear along with the other items but.....no, now isn't the time to think about this. If I can't use the battle suit then I really will die!’

He didn't know why his body suddenly felt so heavy. But there was one obvious thing. In this state he couldn't move his body to avoid the projectiles! And he had no shields to stop the bullets!

“Sword Defense!”

Ark said as he readied his lightsaber. The blue light separated the darkness and bullets scattered everywhere. Sword Defense was the technique that used the electromagnetic energy of the lightsaber to deflect projectiles!

‘Most of my items disappeared but my skills are still intact.’

However he couldn't be relieved just yet. Sword Defense wasn't enough to change the situation. Attacks were coming from three different directions while the range of Sword Defense was limited. It was difficult to stop the bullets with Sword Defense in the darkness.

‘If only it was possible to secure some sight.’

His Survivor coating gave him the Clairvoyance ability that allowed him to see through the darkness. It allowed him to see 20 metres in the darkness. But right now Ark couldn't see anything.

In fact, that was the reason Ark first thought he was dead. He couldn't even

see the bottom when using Clairvoyance.

He thought there had been a problem with his skills but Sword Defense worked properly. Yet the lightsaber was clearly visible to the enemy. He didn't understand the reason but it meant that Clairvoyance was sealed. Thanks to that, Ark couldn't even confirm the form of the opponent.

'Dammit, if Clairvoyance doesn't work then it will keep on staying dark. Is this an effect of the bugged space? Anyway, he was using Sword Defense but it was just like painting a target on him. But how can those guys see in order to fire.....?'

Then something popped into his head.

'Wait? They can see? Then those guys? Can I use this?'

At first he thought the problem with Clairvoyance was due to the bug. But his other skills could be used normally. This meant the space itself might be impervious to Clairvoyance. It was likely that Ark couldn't see even if he loaded an infrared scope.

'I don't know. Those guys only started to attack after I was here for a long time. Then those guys were in the same room but unaware of my presence. They started to attack after I talked. I called out for my team and they started shooting. There is a high possibility that their view is restricted like me. I have to check it first!'

He thought up to there. Ark switched his lightsaber to OFF. Once the sword turned off, he felt pain as the bullet penetrated his body.

'If I don't prepare myself then I'll die!'

Ark stopped his moans of pain from emerging. He firmed up his mental strength and move his legs. The feet used Swamp Walking to move! There were

two reasons why Ark used Swamp Walking.

The first was to make it easier to walk with his increase weight and the second was to make no noise. If his feet glided on the ground then it wouldn't make any sound.

That was the reason to turn the lightsaber to OFF! He stopped any light and sound.

'If those guys can figure out my location from any noise or the light from the lightsaber then.....'

The sound of gunfire stopped. A smile of satisfaction spread on Ark's face. Once he stopped the lightsaber and any noise, the enemy immediately lost Ark's location.

It had become clear. The fact that they didn't shoot meant they couldn't hear Ark. But it still wasn't a fair fight. Ark's only weapon was a lightsaber while they used machine guns. And the advantages of machine guns.....

Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu!

Shortly after it stopped, the shooting started again. But they weren't fired directly at Ark. The projectiles were just blindly shot all over the place!

The strong point of a machine gun was that it was capable of random firing. Even a blindly shot bullet would be able to deal 100% damage. However if he used Sword Defense then he would become a target again.

At that moment, Ark stretched out his hands and fired a skill.

'Take this! Psychokinesis! Psychokinesis!'

After a while.

Tak! Tak tak tak! Tak tak tak!

The sound of something rolling could be heard a few metres away. Ark had fired Psychokinesis blindly until he heard a sound. At the same time, he headed towards the noise while bullets were fired. And dozens of bullets showered down on him! Ark's body flew across the darkness. He glided forward towards the source of the noise.

Wiiing!

And the lightsaber switched ON!

"The fight is now on! Khafra Fencing 3rd style, Galaxy Sword!"

The light of the sword turned on and dozens of swords spread out like a fan. A chain explosion occurred in the darkness. Dozens of lights had spread out from one point! The storm of light revealed the shape of the enemy.

'What, what the? This guy.....?'

Confusion spread on Ark's face. It wasn't Hawk like he expected. These guys also weren't Hawk's subordinates.

A monster with bandages wrapped around it and gun muzzles for hands appeared.

But now wasn't the time to be surprised.

Kuwaah!

The monster with an egg like head shrieked and swung its arms. And bullets were fired from its hands! But this situation was different from before. He was now in a close combat fight with it.

"You're screwed now that I can see you!"

Wiing! Buuuuong! Wiing! Wiing!

The blue light formed a complex pattern across the body of the mummy.

Ark had many skills to deal with people using firearms including Sword Defense. In addition, he rushed in while the enemy was off guard so they were now in a close combat fight. He could deflect the trajectory of the bullets even when it was pouring right in front of me.

In other words, he could redirect the enemy's muzzle towards another direction. Of course, he couldn't redirect all of the bullets.....

Ping! Ping! Ping!

The bullets scattered but blood flowed from various places on his body. But they were just grazes.

On the other hand, Ark's sword was driven into the mummy's vital spots without any errors. The explosion of light decreased its health and the mummy didn't last for even 1 minute. And it broke down into small particles like sand and disappeared.

'Eh? This feeling.....?'

Ark's forehead wrinkled. He felt a sense of deja vu as he saw the mummy disappear. But he couldn't afford to think too deeply about it.

There were still 2 mummies remaining in the darkness. Of course, those two hadn't just been watching while Ark was fighting.

While Ark was fighting in close combat with one mummy, he was also blocking the other two enemies from hitting any vital spots. After the mummy fell, he was exposed to the enemy's gunfire but that was only for a short moment.

'It is impossible with three but that changes when talking about two enemies.'

"Sword Defense!"

Ark rotated his body like a spin top and swung his sword. The bullets flew in

the opposite direction back to the mummies. The bullets were reversed!

When only two enemies were shooting, he could use Sword Defense to direct the trajectory of the bullets. It was a technique that he learnt after dying many times in the training centre!

Kuaah!

The mummies shrieked and stumbled.

“Take this! Sonic Sword!”

At the same time, a blue vortex flew forward. The blue sword moved in a flashy pattern and the mummy’s body exploded. Now he only needed to dispose of one more mummy.

He had dealt with the first two easily.

Wiiing! Wiing! Buoong!

His lightsaber turned the final mummy into small bandage pieces.

“Phew, now that is taken care of.”

Ark sighed and looked around.

“What are earth are these guys? Why are there monsters in the bugged space that occurred when I fell in a black hole? I don’t have a Nymphe so I can’t communicate with my other team members.....it isn’t possible. If I can’t even use the battle suit then clearly I can complain to the publisher. But isn’t Galaxian’s publisher a foreign company? Do I have to file the complaint in English? No, first I should check if there is any loot. There is no guarantee that monsters in a bugged space will drop loot. It is ridiculous that loot would drop in a bugged space. The publishers wouldn’t put loot in an accidental place like this.’

But he couldn’t see anything in the darkness. Ark lay face down on the ground

and tried to find something. No, while he was trying to do that.

Ku ku ku ku! Ku ku ku ku!

Suddenly the space divided and split in half. At the same time, a man ran in and shouted while a bright light shone behind him.

“Hyung-nim, where are you? Are you okay?”

Space 2: In Another Time

SPACE 2. In Another Time

“Eh.....”

Ark scratched his head.

“Here....I mean....who are you?”

Ark looked at the man in front of him with confusion. He had overcome some hopeless circumstances and was about to look for loot when the man jumped in. He hugged Ark and spat out saliva while clamouring away.

“Wuhahaha! Hyung-nim, you’re safe! Well, I always believed in you! Has it been one or two days since I saw Hyung-nim? I never doubted that Hyung-nim would pass!”

But Ark couldn’t help asking.

“Who are you?”

This was the first time he saw that person. The man was a huge 2 metres tall with black skin. Ark didn’t know anyone who looked like that. He was also wearing armour made of crystals and carrying a shield larger than his body. He had no memory of this guy so he didn’t understand how they could have a close brother like relationship. The man just laughed and spoke while grabbing Ark’s hand.

“Hey, Hyung-nim is making such a silly joke.....”

“I’m not joking?”

“Hehehe, please stop. Does it make sense that Hyung-nim doesn’t recognize

me? It has been 10 years since I left home with Hyung-nim so if you don't recognize Basak then you must have dementia."

Basak?

It had been 10 seconds since they've met, not 10 years.

'What is this bastard? No matter how I look, he isn't a user....is he crazy? A crazy NPC? Ha, it really is all over the place. First invisible people and now a crazy NPC has appeared? Is this the influence of the bug? Why did he have to deal with a crazy NPC after falling into a black hole? No, where on earth is this place? Is this space really a bug?'

When he was within the darkness, Ark was 100% convinced that this was a bugged space. That's because Ark had never experienced something like this. But after taking care of the mummy, the space started to shake and a wall opened.

Currently Ark's main role in New World was to take care of bugs. Humans couldn't create a perfect game so naturally there would be errors. There were times when New World was updated and even more errors were caused. Over the past year, Ark had used the power of the master code to fix the bugs.

Ark was suddenly in the darkness so he thought the situation was due to a bug. It reminded him of a bug and he couldn't think of any other possibilities.

'But this distortion doesn't seem like a bug even more.'

Ark exiting the darkness, Ark realized he was in a cave on a stone mountain. And a desert stretched out endlessly in front of him. Everywhere was just a bleak landscape of sand.

'Did I really come to this place due to a bug? Then the black hole? The Silver Star? And the other team members? I need an explanation if it isn't a bug!'

Ark was in large state of confusion. He couldn't blindly think that the situation was due to a bug anymore.

'I don't know what is going on. If this isn't due to a bug then the situation has become more serious. Apart from Slayer and Kaya's group, the way to restore Tori, Ellain and the Silver Star will be lost. Before making a rash decision and filing a bug report, I should try to find out their whereabouts.'

Just as Ark was thinking this.

"Hyung-nim?"

Basak saw Ark's expression and asked.

"What are you thinking about? Did you perhaps hit your head?"

"No, that's not it....."

His head hurt because of this crazy NPC. However, even a mad NPC might be helpful. Ark considered the atmosphere before talking to Basak.

"I'm fine. By the way, have you seen any other people around here?"

"Other people? You know that there is only Teacher-nim and I here."

"Teacher-nim?"

"Well, you passed in the end."

Then another voice was heard from close by. Ark thought that Basak was the only one here so he flinched at the unexpected voice and turned his head. And his eyes widened with shock. Next to the 2 metre tall Basak-he might've even been there from the beginning, was an old man not even half the size. The old man's green skin had so many wrinkles that it was difficult to guess the age. His huge eyes that occupied half his face could be seen when the old man looked up at Ark!

‘.....Yoda?’

That was the only name he could think about. Yoda stroked his sparse beard and continued talking.

“Huhuhu, I never had any doubts. My eyes didn’t lie when I saw the makings of a great warrior in you. I understood the moment I saw you at Minahem Shrine.”

‘....Isn’t this just like Yoda?’

If his name was also Yoda then it would be a complete hit. It was great even if he wasn’t Yoda.

“And you passed through the trial wonderfully just now. You didn’t tell me beforehand but you passed the Cave of Darkness. This is the place where generations of Elim successors have trained. By passing this trial, it is evidence that you have the quality of an Elim.”

Yoda continued. No, Tot continued talking as Ark’s eyes flashed.

“Eh, the Elim?”

“That’s right. Elim. The title of the strongest warrior that represents the Murat!”

“T-the Murat? Then the both of you are Murat?”

“It has been 10 years since I took you in and you’re talking such nonsense. Did your brain disappear after wandering in the darkness for several days? Then where do you think this is? Now, take a look. The 3 suns Ra, Shu and Tefnut that shines on and protect this great land! This is the home of the Murat, Muratio Star! Why on earth are you asking if we’re the Murat?”

Tot pointed towards the 3 suns floating in the sky and said.

Something....return.....

“Unbelievable.....”

Irina fell into a state of panic in the middle of the universe. A black hole that swallowed up the stars was in front of her. Organization X, their underground base and planet exploded which a dark hole. The black hole was worthy of being called a space devil.

Fortunately Hawk had discovered the explosion beforehand and the team members were able to escape from the black hole’s sphere of influence. But not all the teams were successful in escaping. 3 ships, no the other 2 spaceships were completely unrelated.

The only one important to her was the Silver Star. And Ark was inside that ship.

“Ark-nim, please answer! Ark-nim!”

“It won’t work. Even the radio waves have been caught.”

“Sergeant Camel, turn the ship! It isn’t possible to just leave them there!”

“It is impossible! It is already too late!”

“The Silver Star is just thousands of kilometres away!”

“That is true Ensign-nim. But don’t you know? No matter how small, that is still a black hole! The sphere of influence is becoming bigger so if how engine output slows even for a moment then we will be sucked in! Much less returning to it. It would just be suicide!”

“B-but.....”

“Ark-nim wouldn’t want you to behave like this.”

Camel spoke firmly to Irina. Then Hajin who was steering the ship turned around with a dark look and said.

“There is no hull response. The spaceships belonging to Hawk, Ark and Ferguson. The reaction of the three spaceships completely disappeared after being sucked into the black hole. It is regrettable but....it is over.”

Irina flopped down into the captain’s seat like a doll with its string broken. She wasn’t the only one. The same expression could be seen on the faces of 10 people on the screens in front of her. The black hole was a danger zone where not even light could escape once captured! Now the shocking scene of Hawk, Ark and Ferguson’s spaceships being sucked into the black hole had been seen in front of their eyes.

“D-disappeared....”

“They were drawn in by the black hole!”

“W-what should we do? Go in and rescue them?”

“Are you crazy? Do you think that is a manhole in front of you? It is a black hole, a black hole! Don’t you know about black holes? It is the end once you fall in. It is a place that is impossible to escape!”

“Then what will happen to them? Did they die?”

“It is still unknown.....”

“They won’t be able to leave even if they’re alive.”

“So what should we do?”

There was silence after hearing those words. And naturally their gazes were concentrated on one person. It was Irina who was staring at the black hole with a dumb struck expression.

Now that he was drawn into the black hole, their leader Hawk couldn’t be expected to return. So they had no choice but to turn to her for leadership since she had the backing of the galactic federation.

“Ensign-nim.”

Camel saw the members’ eyes on Irina and spoke.

Fortunately, Irina managed to find some degree of calmness at this time. The scene of her partner being sucked into the black hole was shocking and Ark would receive considerable damage but it wasn’t the worst possible situation.

“The good part is that Hawk was drawn into the black hole as well. If Ark-nim had been drawn in by himself then Hawk would probably try to expel him from the investigation team again. But if even Hawk was sucked in then he can’t expel Ark-nim.’

He could avoid the worst case situation of losing his ship and being expelled from the team.

‘Then what we need to do is simple. Hawk and Ark-nim registered at the Fairy on Turan. If Hawk and Ark died then they should revive in a number of days. So we just need to go back to Turan and rest while waiting for them.’

“Everybody please pay attention.”

Irina was just about to speak her thoughts. Hajin who had been looking at the dashboard turned and shouted.

“Ensign-nim, there is a huge surge of energy heading here from the 3 o’clock direction at a tremendous speed! The energy seems to be from a particle cannon! An enemy is attacking!”

A sudden emergency situation! Although she was in a state of panic from Ark’s death (?), Irina was a user who had joined the galactic federation. It was a sudden situation but she didn’t have time for things like ‘?’, ‘hik!’ or ‘what should I do?’

“All members, deploy your shield!”

Irina's voice rang out after Hajin's report! Dozens of luminous lights crossed the space in seconds and hit the members' spaceships.

Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

There was a ringing sound and sparks flew out everywhere. Irina shouted at the team members on the screen while the bridge shook wildly.

"It is an enemy attack! Grasp the situation later. All members immediately change to a battle formation. Mario, activate your wide area shield and protect the ships of our allies! The rest should spread at 10 kilometre intervals with Mario's large spaceship in the centre and prepare your main guns!"

—Enemy attack! All ships prepare for battle!

The members were users strong in battle! They immediately prepared for battle after receiving Irina's command. Meanwhile, 10 ships had arrived from the direction of the particle cannon. The ships approached in a '◇' formation and were different from the investigation team's ships. The armour that covered the hull seemed to be made out of wriggling flesh. No matter how wide the galaxy was, there was only one species that used this type of ship.

"Rama....why are they here.....?"

Irina looked at the approaching fleet and muttered with a moan. There was a noise as a screen unfolded and a Rama warrior wearing red armour appeared. He stared at the team members and shouted threateningly.

-Where? Come! We will conclude it this time, Ark!

That Rama warrior was....

"Hah...."

Tot sighed. He glanced back at Ark before sighing again.

"It really is pitiful. This isn't a third rate drama. Having memory loss at such an important time....."

Ark chose this approach. At first he thought that Basak and Tot were crazy NPCs. However he changed his mind after talking to them for a while. Ark didn't understand why but the contents were very logical. Furthermore, it was hard to imagine a bugged space being like this. This was so well arranged for a bugged space.

'If I'm drawn into a black hole then I'll die. When thinking about it, Galaxian didn't have a rule like this. Just like other users, I thought it was impossible to escape once caught by a black hole. But what if it doesn't cause death? And this isn't a bugged space? There is one other thing I can think of.'

He hadn't just played the game for a few days. Once he grasped it, an answer immediately came out. Event. He could only think that an unexpected event had been activated. Of course, there were still some unanswered questions.

If an event was triggered when he entered the black hole then where were the other members? What about Hawk and Ferguson's groups? Why did he come to Muratio and why were Basak and Tot acting like they knew Ark?

'There are several things I don't know right now but.....'

One thing was clear. This wasn't a bug so he couldn't expect any help from the game publishers. In other words, he needed to find his team members and the Silver Star personally.

'I need to understand this place first in order to do that. If this is an event then there must be a purpose. I need to figure out why I'm dropped in a place like this in order to find the members, Silver Star and enter into the universe again. Tot had talked about the Elim. This was the first time I met a NPC who knows about the Elim. I don't understand while Basak and Tot know me or the

purpose of this event but this is a chance to obtain information about the Elim.’

That was the conclusion Ark reached. It was also why Ark acted like he had amnesia. This was a common trope in 3rd class dramas. Of course, acting skills were required to take advantage of this. But this was an original skill of Ark. Since his early days in New World, he had often used this skill to flatter and trick NPCs.

“Basak....Tot.....the dark cave....um, I only remember a little bit. Yes, while travelling I met Tot-nim and came here. Yes, Basak! I remember you too. You are an old friend who left home with me 10 years ago. Why do I forget you?”

“Hyung-nim, you remember now!”

“No, not yet. It is only a fragment of a memory that I recalled. I don’t know why I came to the training centre or anything about the Elim successor that Tot-nim mentioned.”

“Ugh! To go through all that training only to suffer from memory loss.....”

Basak whimpered with tears in his eyes. However he quickly wiped off tears with his sleeves and hit his chest.

“Hyung-nim, don’t worry! You are still Basak’s Hyung-nim even if you can’t remember! 10 years ago I swore that you would be my Hyung-nim for life when we left home! My loyalty won’t change even if Hyung-nim never recovers your memory!”

“There aren’t many people who can receive the whole hearted loyalty of a Casain.”

“Casain?”

This was the first time Ark heard that word so it caused a ‘?’ to form. Tot clicked his tongue and said.

“Tsk, you don’t even remember that? Well it can’t be helped. The Casain are a minority race that received the blessings of the Shire and have the ability of a guardian. However, they have a stubborn personality and will only serve a master of their own choosing. When a crisis formed occurred on Muratio, their numbers reduced and Basak is the only one left. A person who receives the loyalty of the Casain is a true warrior!”

“Yes! Hyung-nim is a true warrior! I can guarantee that!”

Basak exclaimed in a loud voice and Tot smiled and nodded.

“I chose you as an heir to the Elim and I also can’t ignore the existence of Basak. You’ve also passed the Elim training and returned my expectations. Unfortunately you lost your memory....well, it wasn’t a big deal. A warrior can’t forget his bravery and sense of responsibility in battle. But I will say a few words to pass on some knowledge.”

Tot gathered the impression of a wise man and spoke. Although he was referred to as a teacher, this was the first time Ark saw Tot. His attitude really felt like he was the one who chose Ark to be the heir to the Elim.

“I’ll explain it to you. Follow me.”

Tot turned his body while carrying a staff and continued talking.

“Your memory loss is probably temporary. Over time you will naturally recover it. But right now there is no time for you to remember. Prince Kuhwen is going to the Holy Land to become the next Horus so there is no way to slow down the schedule.”

“The next Horus? Holy Land?”

“I told you when you came to the training centre but....”

Tot stopped for a while and stared at the three suns floating in the sky. He

sighed and began to explain about Muratio.

“Murat King Horus, this is a title and blessing granted by the 3 great suns Ra, Shu and Tefnut. Over the last thousands of years, he Murat managed to achieve an outstanding civilization despite the harsh environment of the galaxy under Horus’ name. But an unprecedented incident occurred a few days ago.”

“Unprecedented incident?”

“Set who was the chief of the Zodiac Garrison rebelled. Set dominated the scattered troops of the Zodiac Garrison, killed the Elim defending Horus and is impersonating Horus.”

“Elim....dead?”

“An Elim is the strongest warrior in the galaxy. The fully manifested power of even a single Elim could destroy planet. However he didn’t have enough time. He only inherited the position of the Elim a few years ago and has failed to awaken the Elim’s entire power. Moreover, the one who rebelled was the garrison leader Set. He grabbed Horus as a hostage during the unfortunate incident and made threats. He knew what would happen but had to yield to Set.”

“Seizing a hostage! That isn’t the behaviour of a warrior!”

Basak shouted with resentment. The Tot continued using his staff to move.

“Set isn’t a warrior! He is just a despicable traitor!”

“But how was Set able to control the army of the Zodiac Garrison?”

Tot flinched at Ark’s question.

He hesitated and sighed before moving again.

“It is due to the difference in political opinion.”

“Political views?”

“Muratio Star receives the protection of the 3 great suns. The 3 suns emit a radiation that transform 70% of the earth to a vast desert and is the driving force behind the explosive growth of our civilization. But it isn’t eternal. Even a sun can’t escape from the laws of the universe itself. And it is clear that the Muratio Star is approaching the time of its end after lasting billions of years.”

“The end.....?”

“Over the last couple of years, an unusual amount of sunspot activity has been spotted in the 2nd star Shu. The astronomers investigated it and discovered the life expectancy of the planet. The energy will continue to amplify for the next few decades before it reaches a limit and will collapse on itself. And the 1st star and 3rd star will also be affected by the collapse. A huge black hole will be created and this area of space will be lost forever.”

It was the end of this solar system. However, the Murat was already a species that could enter the galaxy. Just like Noah made an ark to avoid the end, the Murat created a huge carrier that could move them. It was for this reason that a problem formed.

Once again, the Murat were preparing to enter the galaxy. Of course, other civilizations had occupied the planets outside. Most of them had a lagging civilization but the Murat still respected the inhabitants of the galaxy as equals. If those civilizations were supported then they could grow in the right way. This was the reason why the Murat were praised as gods throughout the galaxy.

The Murat was a species that emphasised balance and moderation so this system had been maintained for a long time. But due to the end of this solar system and the relocation, matters started to change.

“The person who first raised an objection to Horus’ relocation plan was Set

the Zodiac Garrison chief. At that time, Horus found a new planet and started terraforming it while slowly migrating the residents of Muratio. But Set opposed this. The Murat already had a presence in dozens of planets. He insisted that the Murat should move to one of those planets to form a colony.”

Even Ark thought that Set’s claims were more persuasive. The Murat weren’t philanthropists so why shouldn’t they go to an undeveloped planet if it would solve their problem? However Horus had reasons for this idea.

Once again, the Murat weren’t the only species in the galaxy with a developed civilization. They later became known as the 4 species called the Murat, Indus, Potamia and Oritious. If the Murat entered an area of the galaxy belonging to one of those species then they would defend themselves.

In such a situation, the balance between the Murat and the other three species would be upset. The four species had thousands of colonies so if a power struggle between them between them happened then the conflict would become widespread.

“The Murat, Indus, Potamia and Oritious are different but all of them possess the power to blow up an entire planet. There will be no winners or losers in a conflict between the four races. That’s why the Elim exist to act as mediator for any large or small disputes. A race that doesn’t belong to any of the 4 races can watch the situation and mediate from the perspective of a 3rd race. This is an absolute agreement among the species. This is the reason why a human was chosen as the next heir to the Elim.”

‘In his eyes I am a human.’

This was the first time Ark heard of his past (?).

Ark-based on the words from Basak and Tot-was a human kidnapped by space pirates. The Murat’s Elim were tracking the pirates and rescued him but Ark was

an undeveloped earthling. The Elim took Ark in and raised him.

Ark discovered some important points in Tot's explanation.

'I guess it when hearing the talk about the Murat but this isn't the galaxy I came from. No, it is the same galaxy but the time frame is different. This is a time when the 4 races prospered. It must be hundreds or thousands of years ago. I heard some physicists say that it was possible to use a black hole for time travel. This world was created against the backdrop of such a theory? So it was this type of system.'

Now that Ark obtained more information, he was even more convinced that this was an event. Then there was no need to worry about his missing items. In games, items that disappeared during special events would reappear again when it ended.

Now Ark just needed to successfully finish this event. Then he could search for his team members and the Silver Star to return safely. If he looked at the atmosphere, the person who probably held the key was Tot.

"The conversation drifted for a bit."

Then Tot opened up again.

"Set was able to control the Zodiac army thanks to this. Horus attaches a great importance to peace but they were fed up with this mindset. They feel like Horus isn't qualified to deal with the situation against the Indus, Potamia and Oritious. The commanders of the Zodiac Garrison moved on Set's insistence. The Zodiac assisted in the rebellion that killed the Elim and Horus. But the great Ra, Syu and Tefnut have not forsaken the Murat."

Just before the Zodiac rebellion broke out. Kuhwen the only heir to Horus had headed to the Holy Land on a pilgrimage. And the Elim's spiritual mentor called Tot had arrived at the city after receiving word about some troubles happening

in the Zodiac garrison.

“That’s why I have to meet Prince Kuhwen and go to the sacred place Tri-Force.

Tot turned his body and said with a pleasant smile. It seemed like he had something important to say....even if he spoke suddenly....fortunately Tot remembered that Ark had amnesia and gave a further explanation.

“Horus can only be inherited by the bloodlines of 37 pure bloodlines on Muratio Star so their exchanges with the outside world are limited. There is a ward around the planet called Abraxas that can be activated so that no spaceships can enter the atmosphere of Muratio. This was the reason that Set and the Zodiac Garrison could rebel. Thousands of Murat fleets have advanced into the galaxy so they don’t know about the Zodiac rebellion yet.”

“Ah, yes.....”

Then the Zodiac cut off contact with the outside?

‘This system is what allows such a revolt.’

The words bubbled up in his throat but he pushed it down. This wasn’t the important thing.

“Abraxas can be operated with two devices. One of them is already occupied by Set while the other one is located in Tri-Force. Only Horus can operate Abraxas but it was also designed to respond to the Shire in their bloodline if there was a problem. In other words, Horus died so the only one who can manipulate Abraxas is Kuhwen.”

So the situation was simple. Prince Kuhwen needs to go to Tri-Force and release Abraxas. And then the Murat forces scattered throughout the galaxy would be told of the uprising. Then the Murat fleet would return, smash the

rebel army and Muratio Star would regain peace again.

“But what about Set?”

“The fact about how to use Abraxas is a secret. Of course, Set knows that there is more than one control device. After the palace was controlled by the Zodiac, he probably has his soldiers searching for Kuhwen and the other control device. That’s the reason why I quickly gathered you who isn’t prepared yet and made you the Elim’s Heir.”

Tot looked at Ark and continued.

“Just before the rebellion occurred, Horus and the Elim called me here and Ra, Shu and Tefnut visited me. You have safely become an Elim successor and have inherited the sun gods’ will. Now your mission is to guard Kuhwen until he safely arrives at Tri-Force.”

Perhaps he came to the past because he possessed the profession of Elim’s Heir. When he thought about it, this role was limited to Ark. Maybe that’s why he wasn’t with his other team members, Ferguson or Hawk even though they entered together.

‘If I can’t find a way to escape here then there is no meaning in finding the team and the Silver Star. When looking at this situation, the only way to return will be to succeed in this mission. And I am currently the Prince’s defence. When the rebellion is suppressed, the Prince will become Horus the Emperor of the Murat. Then I can search for the team and the Silver Star.’

It wasn’t just to escape from this place. Ark was the Elim’s Heir but Xanax the last Elim had disappeared a long time ago. So he couldn’t learn many related skills despite it being a unique profession.

But right now Ark was in the home of the Murat, Muratio Star. And the NPC in front of him was the Elim’s spiritual mentor. Who knows? He might have a

chance to earn a skill or item related to the Elim.

Anyway, it became clear what Ark had to do here. He needed to guard Prince Kuhwen while escorting him to the Elim's Holy Land! Ark was thinking that when the sand under his feet moved. And it scattered until it changed into letters.

-You have acquired undisclosed information about the ancient alien species called the Murat.

The universe has a long history and many alien civilizations have grown and declined.

Finding undisclosed information can help illuminate the history of the universe.

Hidden alien artefacts or technology can play a decisive role.

<Through some unknown force, you have arrived at the Murat planet Muratio that existed a long time in the past. And you discovered that a rebellion broke out on Muratio a long time ago. This information will be important to future research on the Murat> + Information about the ancient alien species Murat (3/15).

+ You have obtained 300 Adventure points for

acquiring information about the Murat.

+ You have gained 5 Intelligence for acquiring information about the Murat.

There was no Nymph so an information window was created through this method. Anyway, it was 100% certain that this wasn't a bugged space. It was certain after Ark experienced the letters changing supernaturally.

"This is one of the sacred places of the Murat."

Tot indicated towards a city with his staff. The sacred place wasn't a prosperous city. It was just a historical or religiously important place. Anyway, that's why the city Tot indicated wasn't prosperous. No, in fact it was more like a shabby village so it was embarrassing to call it a city.

But right now the next Horus was in the city. If Prince Kuhwen successfully quelled Set's rebellion then the city would probably gain another name.

"Hurry. Prince Kuhwen is waiting for us."

Tot increased his pace.

Space 3: For the Benefit of Muratio Star!

SPACE 3. For the Benefit of Muratio Star!

‘This.....’

Ark scratched his head. He had to go on a journey with the prince to suppress a rebellion. He needed to reach Tri-Force to release the space ward and call the Murat forces currently in space to take care of the rebel army on Muratio Star.

Of course, the journey wouldn’t be easy. But the person Ark was accompanying was the prince who would become the next Horus. Even if it was a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the prince would be accompanied by guardsmen befitting his status.

‘It would be good if I could join forces with the guardsmen.’

That’s what he thought.....

“Are they the prince’s guardsmen?”

Ark asked after Tot guided him to the centre of the city to the shrine where the prince lived. Tot nodded while scratching his head with the handle of the staff.

“Prince Kuhwen is someone who loves literature and art more than war. So he also dislikes bringing a lot of soldiers.”

“It turned out like this.”

A sigh naturally flowed from Ark’s mouth. Only 30 soldiers could be seen around the shrine. There were also 20 people in the entourage wearing the clothes of scholars and artists. They were NPCs that were no use in a situation

like this. They gawked and gossiped as Tot and Ark entered the shrine.

“Is that the person that Tot-nim regards as the Elim’s Heir?”

“There is a rule that the Elim can’t be a Murat but.....”

“Isn’t he an orphan that the late Elim picked up? He is also an uncivilized human.”

“The humans are a species that have barely sneaked out from the stone age. Now a human has been selected to become the heir to the Elim?”

“The Elim are warriors that represent the Murat. In a Murat emergency, they can take the place of the commander. In other words, the prince might appoint the Elim successor as our commander. We have to take the orders of a primitive man.”

“How horrible.”

“The Zodiac took over so the selection of the Elim successor needed to be sped up. It is doubtful whether he really has value.”

And they didn’t seem to like Ark. No, to be surprised they looked at him with contempt. Ark sighed while Basak snorted and looked around roughly.

“Those bastards! Hyung-nim, just give me a command! I will be your shield and knock down everyone who is talking badly about you!”

“It doesn’t matter. They’re just making noise.”

Ark replied in a disinterested voice. The reason why Ark sighed wasn’t because he was hurt by the soldiers’ words. Ark’s heart wasn’t delicate enough to be injured by the gossip of some NPCs. It was just hopeless. He had an ominous feeling that the journey wouldn’t be smooth after seeing such soldiers. However Tot misunderstood Ark’s reaction.

“Yes, you thought well. The Elim is a person who shows things through

actions, not with their mouth. If you show your ability then their attitudes will change. One of the important qualities of the Elim is not to be affected by ignorant words.”

“But where is Prince Kuhwen?”

“I’m here.”

An answer came from behind him. Tot, Basak and Ark turned around as they heard the voice. The next moment Ark’s face turned confused. There were 10 children behind him. They were covered in dirt and looked just like neighbourhood children playing in a village.

“T-this! Once again.....”

“Prince-nim, you are.....”

Ark heard the voice of an aristocrat mixed in among the children. But they were all wearing similar clothing so he didn’t know which one was the prince. Then one of the boys started to talk with an innocent smile.

“Jed, why are you looking around restlessly with such an expression? Surely you haven’t forgotten my face during the short time you were away?”

Jed was a name he heard for the first time. But judging by the atmosphere, that seemed to be Ark’s name. And that meant this child talking calmly was the prince! Ark was astonished because the prince was younger than he thought.

“What? No, huh? Then you...?”

“What? Have you really forgotten my face? Or are you teasing me after seeing the other children? If you’re doing such a thing then stop. It isn’t funny.”

The boy inflating the ball said.

“No, actually he.....”

Tot approached the boy and quickly whispered. The boy looked at Ark with an astonished expression and approached him before sighing.

“Such a thing....I heard from Tot that the test to assess the qualities of an Elim was dangerous but to even lose your memories? It is regrettable that you lost your memories but you won through such hardships and passed the test. Tot’s eyes really are sharp to be able to recognize your talent since childhood.”

“You’re overpraising me, Your Highness.”

He lowered his head with a humble expression. The entourage gathered around him then shouted.

“L-lost memories?”

“Oh my god! Elim’s Heir is going to be someone who lost their memories? Does that make sense? Can we rely on someone who doesn’t even remember his name in this state of emergency? Your Highness, this is ridiculous! Please cancel Jed’s heir designation!”

“Watch your words!”

The boy turned his head and shouted. Ark, the children and entourage looked surprised at the boy’s unexpected behaviour. At that moment, Ark witnessed an amazing scene. The boy’s face that looked approximately 10 years old was changing dramatically. The mischievous boy’s face changed into that of the Murat prince.

“What did you do after my Royal Father was killed by Set? The hearts of the Murat residents trembled with anxiety. The glorious Murat nobility were just worried about losing their status. In order to rescue the Murat, he pushed through the Elim successor test and lost his memories. What do your eyes see when you look at such a man?”

The boy, no the prince looked at his retinue and continued talking.

“Answer me! Do you think Jed is worthy of your contempt? Answer me! Do you have the qualifications to spurn Jed after he lost his memories? No. So close your mouths. Although I couldn’t receive the formal succession, I am still the person who will become the next Horus!”

‘This guy.....’

Ark glanced at Kuhwen. When listening to the entourage, Ark had thought ‘Hah, this guy must not be able to do anything about the rude comments around him.’ Yet a children covered in dirt had managed to quell their reaction.

He needed to command the NPCs for this task so the NPC’s tendencies was very important. However, his uncomfortable feeling went away after seeing Kuhwen. Furthermore, he even felt vaguely nostalgic.

‘This NPC, it isn’t strange. Yes, Haverstein!’

He became friendly when Haverstein who was the Lord of Jackson in his early days of New World. He first knew Viscount Haverstein after his father died in the labyrinth. Ark met him after returning to Jackson with the news. At that time, Haverstein was a similar age to Kuhwen and his acceptance of his father’s death impressed Ark. He maintained a good relationship after that and helped Ark become a hero of New World.

The atmosphere around Kuhwen was very similar to when Haverstein was young.

‘I should maintain a good relationship with him.’

Fortunately Kuhwen liked Ark. After subduing his retinue, Kuhwen grabbed Ark’s hand.

“Jed, that fact that you lost your childhood memories is saddening for me. But

you just lost your adoptive father so maybe your amnesia is a blessing. I also lost my father but I have no time for grief. I need to take control of the Murat or the Indus, Potamia and Oritious might break the peace. Countless Murat would then lose their children like us. It isn't just for my sake that I want to gain the status of Horus. Nor is it revenge for my Royal Father. I need your help for the sake of peace and millions of Murat. Jed, you are the Elim's Heir so we are now equal. Therefore I ask that help me become the Murat's Horus. Will you lend me your power?"

"It is Ark."

Ark replied with a smile.

"That is a name I discarded in the past that I recalled through my training."

His name was corrected to Ark. It would become confusing if he kept on being called Jed. The retinue's expressions turned ugly at Ark's attitude but Kuhwen just smiled.

"Yes, my old friend Ark. Will you accept my request?"

"Of course Your Majesty."

Ark kneeled down and replied. Right now Ark wasn't thinking about solving the problem and returning to his galaxy. He sincerely wanted to help this young NPC.

"I will do my best to help you."

And he answered with a resolute attitude. A 3D image of an obelisk with an inscription carved on it floated in front of him.

<For the Benefit of Muratio Star!>

You have reached another space and time after entering a black hole and met the Murat Prince.

Currently the Murat Emperor Horus has been killed by rebels led by Set and the Murat have fallen into a state of confusion. Fortunately, the Prince was heading to the Holy Land on a pilgrimage and managed to avoid Set's assassins along with the retinue that accompanied him. Tot who is referred to as the spiritual mentor of the Elim has said that the only way to quell the rebellion is to turn off Abraxas located in Tri-Force and continent the Murat fleet scattered throughout the universe. When you succeed in this mission, you will be able to return to your original universe.

Difficulty: –

A formal quest was registered. Then Tot approached and began to talk.

“Now, you have formally become the Elim’s Heir. You should be familiar with what type of presence the Elim is. There is a reason the Elim is called the strongest warrior in the galaxy. Take this for the moment.”

And a set of armour was pulled out. It was a set of boots, helmet and pants larger than the petite Yoda so Ark didn’t know where it was stored. No, he was being given items so he wouldn’t question it too closely....

-You have acquired some items.

<Elim's Training Helmet (Force +300)>, <Elim's Training Armour (Force +300)>, <Elim's Training Pants (Force +300)>, <Elim's Training Boots (Force +300)>

Ark received the set of armour.

"This is the armour that the Elim's Heir uses while training. Your foster father who was the previous Elim gave you lessons so your spirit should be prepared. It isn't armour intended for actual fighting but it is better than the armour that general soldiers use. This should be sufficient for an Elim's Heir."

In Tot's words, the armour wasn't a magic or unique set. But in the current circumstances Ark only had a helmet. It was no different from when he first began the game with rags that only had 1 defense. However the armour set had high defense compared to the level and it also had 300 Force attached to each one.

.....It was perfect.

Ark even switched the helmet.

"Now it is time to consult about the future."

Tot continued speaking.

"Damn! Open! Open up!"

A shout was suddenly heard from the side of the entrance. Kuhwen and Tot turned around with a doubtful expression. The guards that protected the

soldiers lowered their heads and reported.

“Your Majesty, the residents have caught some suspicious people.”

“Suspicious people?”

“Yes, they look like animals and appear to be an unknown alien race from outside Muratio Star. They were lingering around the village.”

“Unknown alien race? How can there be such a species?”

Kuhwen frowned as his entourage murmured.

“Your Majesty, perhaps they were sent by Set to spy on us?”

“I also have the same idea. There is a ward around this planet so Muratio Star isn’t easy to enter. The fact that an unknown species has entered this place isn’t a coincidence. They might be spies or biological weapons of Set. I think we should dispose of them right away.

“Please wait a moment.”

Then Ark interrupted.

“It is better to see them first. I might know them.”

An unknown alien species was seen in Muratio Star. He had the idea that it might be one of the parties sucked into the black hole after hearing it. It would be useful to the situation even if they were from Ferguson or Hawk’s team. However the retinue was prepared to attack.

“Jed, how would you know them? How could you know an outside alien species?”

“Jed is now Ark.”

Kuhwen said while looking at his attendants.

“And my idea is also the same as Ark’s. Even if they are a suspicious alien

species, we can't simply kill them without looking at them first. That's because Horus is a position that maintains peace among the various races in the galaxy. I can't just kill someone without seeing them. Especially if they are someone Ark knows. I will decide after meeting them with Ark."

"Thank you."

"It is your right."

Kuhwen smiled and shook his head. Meanwhile 10 locals dragged in some wagons. There were 4 alien species trapped inside. 3 of them that looked like monkeys were embracing each other while crying. And the remaining one was angry and abusing the residents with curses.....

"Eh? Y-you?"

"These bastards! Open! Open this up! Do you know who I am.....eh? H-Hyung-nim?"

Ark flinched and turned his head as he looked at a hamster! It was Ark's subordinate, Tori.

"Why are you here by yourself? The other team members?"

"Waaaaang! H-Hyung-nim! It really is Hyung-nim. Hyung-nim, you're alive!"

"Okay. Try and calm yourself down. Where are the other team members?"

"Ohuk! I don't know! I don't know! I just remember going into the black hole with you! Then I was in a forest in the middle of a desert! The Nymphe and armour was missing and we barely managed to escape the desert and reach this village when these people caught and locked us up! Hyung-nim, these guys called me a hamster! Yes? Please say something!"

Tori answered while dripping tears.

"A-Ark?"

One of the monkeys that was crying suddenly raised his head and spoke in a tearful tone. And he crossed to the window grate and shouted.

“A-Ark! It really is Ark! Ark, it’s me! Me! I’m also alive!”

“Eh? What the, this monkey? Do I know you?

“Damn! It’s me! Ferguson!”

“I’m A!”

“I’m B!”

The monkeys shouted. No, they.....Ferguson, A and B....eh?

“What, what the? Did this world change you into monkeys?”

“M-monkeys! We are the Umpu Clan!”

“Umpu clan? Wait? Then you also weren’t human before?”

Come to think of it, Ark had never seen Ferguson, A and B’s appearance properly. On the grey planet he had no interest but Ferguson, A and B had been wearing thick armour so that only the eyes were exposed. No, it was strange when he thought about it. Ferguson, A and B had exceptionally long arms compared to other users. This was the reason why.

Ferguson, A and B looked like monkeys once their armour was peeled off. Ferguson, A and B’s identity was revealed out of the blue.....if he thought about the behaviour they demonstrated in the meantime, he wasn’t surprised.

“Yes! The Umpu was an alien race with low intelligence and high stamina and defense. They were innate warriors! They were excellent warriors.....no, now wasn’t the time to think of this! Anyway, along with their equipment it wasn’t easy for them to die! Ark, you should do something!”

“As expected, do you know these people?”

“Yes, unfortunately.”

Ark replied to Kuhwen’s question. Once again, his team members consisted of alien species. He was worried about their safety and thought he needed to pass the quest to escape and find them. Yet instead of his team members, it was actually a hamster and the 3 monkey brothers?

Well, Tori was a non-pioneer NPC so it would be the end if he died. Other than Ellain, it was lucky that he found Tori first. While Ark was thinking with an uncomfortable expression, Kuhwen smiled and said.

“Hamster and monkeys, your companions are quite broad.”

“I wouldn’t call them my companions but.....”

“If they’re killed then it would be difficult?”

“That’s right.”

“Didn’t you hear? Release them.”

Kuhwen commanded with a nod. The retinue around him jumped with surprise and exclaimed.

“Release them? We still don’t know who these people are!”

“We can’t just release them because Jed, no Ark says so! How does Ark know them?”

“And we can’t call an alien species our equals! Look at them! They’re wandering around naked without proper clothes like savages! They are like beasts! To suddenly release them.....”

“What? Beasts? What did they say?”

Ferguson huffed at the words. However the retinue just continued deriding him.

“Look at this! Didn’t he just show it? That’s evidence that he is a savage beast!”

“This bastard! What did you say?”

Ferguson shouted angrily. To be honest, this wasn’t just the opinion of the retinue. This guy was weeping while captured until his situation changed. Now he was reacting to the retinue’s taunts. He really possessed the IQ of a monkey. On the other hand, the hamster showed a different standard of judgement from the monkeys.

“I’m different from those monkeys! My species isn’t dangerous at all. Just look at me! I’m all round so what type of risk can I be? My teeth are only capable to peeling seeds. Look how soft my fur is. Please touch it. If you touch then you’ll know that my species is a harmless animal! Yes!”

He was like a puppy that wagged its tail and turned on its belly. The form of Tori made even Kuhwen blush.

“Once again, the range of your companions is really wide.”

“Like I said, they aren’t really companions.”

Ark blushed and replied.

It wasn’t a compliment that he wanted. Anyway, the hamster and 3 monkey brothers were released thanks to ‘Ark’s defense+ Kuhwen’s order+ Tori’s shameful survival instinct.’

“Phew Ark, I owe you a favour.”

Ferguson approached Ark and sighed with relief. He placed an arm around Ark and spoke.

“I really almost died. Damn, I don’t know what is going on. Where is this place? Why did we have to come to a place like this?”

“Your head is at the standard of a monkey so of course you wouldn’t understand.”

“Eh? What?”

“If you don’t want something to happen then take off your arm. Yes?”

“What? Did you eat something strange? Why....wait? Why have you been speaking so roughly since earlier? This child, don’t you know who I am? You might misunderstand because of this shape but I am Ferguson, Ferguson. The Ferguson you kept on praising on the grey planet. I am Ferguson who reached the 18th ranking.”

“I know, you are Ferguson.”

Ark quickly interrupted.

And looked at him with cold eyes and laughed.

“You are the type of guy that attached an anchor to my ship during when running away from the black hole.”

“Eh? T-that....”

“I’ll say it again. If you don’t want something to happen then take off your arm. Yes?”

Ferguson hurriedly removed his arm like it was on fire. He studied Ark’s face and opened his mouth to make excuses.

“Attention.”

Ark spoke in a low voice. Ferguson, A and B automatically jerked into the right posture. Ark stared at them in the eye before turning his body and murmured.

“We can talk about the details later. There isn’t a lot of time.”

While Ferguson, A and B stayed in that stance, Ark followed Kuhwen and his

entourage into the shrine. Ferguson who was making a dumb expression suddenly woke up and shouted at his brothers.

“What, what the? You guys! Why did you listen to his command?”

“I-I’m not sure. Why is it?”

“But Hyung-nim also took that stance!”

“Ah no, it was an involuntary reflex.....”

“That’s right! I did it as well!”

“Eh? M-me too!”

“Ohhh. What the? Why did I listen to that guy? Furthermore, it is so cold. My body is trembling like I have a cold.”

“M-me too. Is it because the armour is removed?”

Ferguson, A and B trembled and stuttered. But their armour disappearing wasn’t the reason for their trembles. There was no armour but they were in a desert with 3 suns. The reason they were trembling was due to an unknown trauma deep inside them.

Ark’s chilly attitude woke up the sleeping trauma in Ferguson. However they hadn’t realized it yet.

“We can’t delay here.”

The 3 monkey brothers walked into the shrine while still feeling the trembling. Ark, Kuhwen, Toto, Basak and the retinue was gathered inside the shrine. Their purpose was obvious.

It was to find a way to Tri-Force to turn off Abraxas and quell Set’s rebellion. While waiting for Ark, no Jed, they had finished the expedition preparations. The problem was how to reach Tri-Force.

“I know that we are in a hurry.”

An aristocrat who seemed to be high ranking shook his head and said.

“It has already been 3 days since Set assassinated Horus. When the Zodiac rebelled, they blocked off information and are also periodically contacting Pharaohs from different villages around Muratio Star. And he is also aiming for Abraxas. If the Pharaohs’ fleets are gathered then Abraxas won’t be able to hold up for long.

The name Pharaoh might mean a king in ancient Egypt but the Pharaohs in the Murat were more like castle lords or governors. The Pharaoh that Ark found in the Beltana pyramid was the same thing. He was a Murat who managed the territory of Beltana. Anyway.

“Set has perfectly controlled all the villages on Muratio Star. And if Set occupies all the major cities before the space fleet enters then we’ll have to admit defeat. Because a devil is sleeping underneath Muratio Star’s main city.

“Uhh....”

The retinue spilled saliva when talking.

But Ark was composed. What was the point of drooling or speaking with a shaking voice? Basak explained in a low voice to an ignorant Ark.

“A long time ago a crisis came to Muratio Star. Hundreds of years ago, the core of Muratio Star suddenly had a nuclear fission reaction and was rapidly collapsing. At that time, a device was installed underneath the major cities of Muratio Star in order to stabilize the core. That device is the devil that they are talking about.”

Ark immediately understood the situation after hearing Basak’s words.

The Murat had the scientific power to destroy an entire power. That scientific

power was a double edged sword. It was a power that could deal a fatal blow to themselves. This was why Muratio Star was covered with Abraxas and prohibited the use of any machines that were weapons. A machine equivalent to a weapon would just be a threat to their peaceful world.

That's why the soldiers in the Muratio Star villages were weaker compared to those in the galaxy. It was also why the space fleet could suppress the rebellion once they arrived on Muratio Star. It wasn't possible to stop cannons with swords.

But there was a reason Set rebelled. That was the devil core control system that the aristocrat was talking about. It was a device that could collapse the core of Muratio Star. If he occupied all the major cities and took control of the core system then it was no difference from holding Muratio Star hostage.

However Kuhwen's current power wasn't strong enough to stop Set from occupying the major cities. They had no choice but to call the space fleet to stop Set's rebellion.

"This is no different from life or death. We've already wasted a day of our valuable time waiting for this human."

'.....In the end?'

Ark had an upset expression. They seemed to have already made up their minds about Ark. The repeated attitude of the attendants aggravated him. They were probably like this before Ark even came. These people didn't know Ark. They were people who knew Ark as Jed. They were unaware that he wasn't Jed anymore.

Fortunately Ark had a solid foundation. Kuhwen changed from the dirt infested clothes into something inscribed with a hawk.

"I have decided. Tot and Ark isn't to blame. In addition, it has already

happened. Now is now the time to worry about the past. It is better to refrain from any unnecessary words.”

Kuhwen looked at Tot and nodded.

“Tot, go ahead.”

“Hrmm hrmm, understood.”

Tot hit the ground with his staff while coughing lightly. Light spread and sand piled on the table that Kuhwen and his companions were sitting around. And the map soon formed a 3D map. The desert occupied most of the areas but there were also forests and valleys scattered around Muratio Star. Tot pointed to a dark spot and spoke.

“I think we have to pass through here.”

“W-wait? Isn’t that the Valley of Darkness?”

“Oh my god! Tot, are you insane? Don’t you know what type of place the Valley of Darkness is?”

“I’m aware. The Valley of Darkness is a zone infested with dangerous monsters and an unpredictable climate and terrain. Armies have been mobilized several times and they’ve never succeeding in passing through it.”

“Yet you’re still saying that?”

“Right now we only have 80 troops. There are only 30 regular guardsmen. The remaining 50 are the city’s guards. Hundreds of soldiers couldn’t pierce through the Valley of Darkness yet you want to try with just this number?”

“However we still have to go there.”

Tot said in a calm voice.

“It has been 3 days since Set took over and he has already taken over many

major cities. Right now we are in the Minaheim neighbourhood. At this rate, it will only be a matter of time until Set takes control of all the cities. The other threat left to Set is Abraxas. So we have to try everything to access the control device.”

“Set doesn’t know that the control system is in Tri-Force.”

“But Set knows that another control device exists. And that it is in one of the scattered Holy Lands. I think this is the main reason why Set’s occupation of the major cities is slower. Perhaps a large number of his forces are mobilized to block all paths to the Holy Lands.”

“But Set won’t think about a route through the Valley of Darkness?”

Kuhwen laughed after hearing Tot’s words.

“Yes, it is such a dangerous place that just hearing the names caused your attendants to jump. If it wasn’t for your Majesty’s lineage of Horus then I would never think it was possible.”

“I guess so.”

Kuhwen nodded his head.

“P-please wait a moment Your Majesty!”

“Yes, the problem isn’t that simple!”

“We have received reports that various soldiers from the cities under attack have escaped and are gathering. Even if we break through the Valley of Darkness, Set’s troops will also be stationed at the Holy Land. The soldiers are moving through various routes to this area so wouldn’t it be safer to move after they join us?”

“I’ve also guessed that Set has stationed soldiers at the Holy Land. However it will take too much time if we wait for the soldiers to gather. So we will set

another destination for them. They will join us on the other side of the Valley of Darkness."

"B-but...."

"If we fail then it is the end of Muratio Star!"

"Set won't even need to take control of every major city."

Kuhwen looked around at his entourage before saying in a firm voice.

"I know better than anyone about the meaning of my life after my Royal Father died. But my life is nothing compared to all the people on Muratio Star. Horus exists for the people. To save my life while endangering my people is too outrageous. And.....'

Kuhwen looked at Ark and laughed.

"I believe in Ark the Elim's Heir who has returned."

Space 4: 3 Monkey Brothers

SPACE 4. 3 Monkey Brothers

There was a stone hut with dozens of pillars. A man entered the stone hut wearing a helmet that looked like the head of an animal. Then an old man sitting in front of a pillar hurriedly got up and bowed.

“You’ve arrived.”

“I heard those guys have arrived.”

“Yes, some time ago.”

“Show me the video.”

The old man touched a stone pillar with his hands and light spread, causing sand particles to form a video. The video showed a huge number of battleships gathered around a giant planet. The man wearing the beast shaped helmet snorted.

“They arrived quickly.”

“Will we be okay?”

“It should be fine. Abraxas is the Murat’s absolute space ward that will even prevent a fleet containing thousands of ships. If those guys bombard Abraxas then it will last at least a week. That is if they attack.”

It was taboo to attack Abraxas! Using the weapons of the space fleet to attack Abraxas was a criminal offense and was just like rebelling against Horus. Once Horus activated Abraxas, no alien species would be able to step foot on Muratio.

This was the absolute rule that reigned over all laws.

Of course, the space fleet wasn't dispatched to Muratio Star because they were bored. Regular contact had been broken so an unexpected problem might've occurred on their mother planet. But it wasn't possible for the Pharaohs to go against a law that existed for thousands of years based on simple intuition.

The video floating from the stone pillar showed that. The Pharaoh's fleet arrived in orbit around Muratio Star but couldn't move anymore and kept a distance of a few thousand kilometres.

'This is the limit of the Murat. But I am different from you guys.'

"Block all communication channels. They don't know about what is happening in Muratio Star so they won't be able to do anything. We have to pay more attention to Prince Kuhwen."

The man narrowed his eyes and continued.

"I've received information that soldiers from all over are planning to join him to oppose me. Of course, they are unremarkable but if they join Prince Kuhwen then it will become more troublesome than it is now. Even if Prince Kuhwen is leading them, there is no meaning against my army. But I have to use every method possible to catch Prince Kuhwen. Have you receive any reports related to them yet?"

"Chasing parties have been sent all over the place so information should arrive soon."

"Don't make me wait too long."

Red eyes gleamed through the animal helmet. The old man's face quickly drained of blood and bowed.

“I will do my best, Lord Set!”

“I will see.”

Set spoke with a low voice before turning his body.

‘.....Even though.....’

Ark sighed and shook his head.

-I believe in Ark.

Kuhwen had said that before they left. Ark wanted to return all his expectations. He liked the NPC Kuhwen and he also needed to complete the quest in order to escape this place.

“Ark, you couldn’t take formal lessons before the Elim has been killed but the training admitted that you are the Elim’s Heir. So unofficially you are equivalent to an Elim. Although the Elim is an honorary post, as Horus I can give you the right to become the commander. I will leave command of the expedition to you and wish you the best in accomplishing this mission.”

And Kuhwen delegated the power to him. The troops in the expedition consisted of 80 people. Of those, 50 were city guards without proper training and Ark who had fallen into a completely different time and space. Ark couldn’t feel excited.

‘80 people. It isn’t a small number but the Valley of Darkness is a place that frightens the nobles just from hearing the name. I don’t know how strong the monsters on Muratio Star are but having 80 troops is no guarantee of safety.’

Actually, the morale of the troops visibly fell when they heard the destination. It was to the extent that Tori and Ferguson were affected by the atmosphere despite not knowing what the Valley of Darkness was.

‘And it isn’t the end once we escape from the Valley of Darkness. According to Tot, Set has stationed soldiers at various Holy Lands. The number of soldiers can’t be confirmed. It might mean a large war in the end.’

Battles was originally Ark’s specialty. But it was different when talking about a war consisting of hundreds or thousands of troops. Fighting alone and fighting while leading troops was completely different.

Of course, Ark also had a lot of experience in fighting large scale battles. But that experience was in New World. He fought in wars in Galaxian on Beltana and Athamas but Ark was just leading a small troop of his own party members.

He didn’t have experience directly fighting hundreds of troops. Furthermore, New World and Galaxian were games with entirely different backdrops. The tactics differed depending on the game.

‘But Kuhwen said there is no one else to take control of the expedition. So I have no choice but to learn how to lead the soldiers in this room.’

Ark focused on this part. No, he wanted to focus on it. But his stress wasn’t easy once the expedition actually began. The cause of his stress was Kuhwen’s attendants, the nobles.

“Pant pant pant. Ah, damn! How long do we have to walk for?”

“I am a noble. Do I have to keep walking in this hot desert?”

“Damn, I can’t move anymore. I’m going to take a break here. Otherwise I will die before reaching the Valley of Darkness. Hey Ark, are you listening to me? Are you trying to kill us?”

The nobles kept on complaining. Ark was dumbstruck.

He had definitely forced them to march non-stop since leaving on the expedition. However the nobles were riding camels. The soldiers were the ones

marching on foot in the sizzling desert yet the nobles were the ones complaining. Their behaviour really matched those of aristocrats. Right now Muratio Star was in rebel situation yet these guys were acting like they were going on a cruise?

“Take care of your health. The soldiers are the ones walking but they are still fine. If the soldiers hear people riding a camel saying that then wouldn’t their morale lower?”

Ark quietly told them.

“What? The soldiers? Are we going to be treated just like soldiers?”

“We are the Murat nobility. We are different from the Murat with conventional lineages. Yet the Elim’s Heir dares compare us to common soldiers?”

“This would be hard to ignore even if you are the official Elim!”

“We have a status close to a king so we are much higher than you!”

“Tsk tsk, indeed an uncivilized human. The eyes of a undeveloped human can’t recognize the aristocrats. Entrusting my life to such a person is really miserable.”

.....The nobles swarmed and bit after hearing his words. They didn’t hesitate to make discriminatory remarks about his race. Naturally Kuhwen scolded the aristocrat’s behaviour. The nobles closed their mouths with dissatisfaction but started complaining again once Kuhwen looked away. Ark’s insides seethed with anger as it continued.

‘I’d like to bury them all in the sand but.....’

He knew that they all had considerably high positions based on Basak’s explanation. Even if Kuhwen was Horus, their status meant that he couldn’t

easily punish them so the complaints continued. And he braced himself to hear their talk whenever Kuhwen left. Ark wasn't the one being offended. Jed was to blame for the nobles' attitudes, not Ark.

"Hyung-nim really has stomached a lot in the meantime. Warriors that can match Hyung-nim can only be counted on one finger. Nevertheless, these nobles who only live in a castle are complaining about uncivilized humans. No. The nobles are acting this way because they are scared of Hyung-nim's personality. That is why I decided to follow Hyung-nim. But the nobles don't know Hyung-nim like I do. You just endured it and watched on in silence. The nobles also despise the fact that you have become the Elim's successor."

The person called Jed was absolutely a docile character. But that alone wasn't enough to 100% satisfy the nobles.

'It is probably the same for Kuhwen. He can't do anything against the aristocrat's complaints. They don't listen to Kuhwen's scolding even if he is to become the next Horus. Maybe their aim is to delay the marching speed since they don't want to take my orders.'

He could see their intentions based on the attitudes of the nobles at the shrine. Once again, this was a desperate situation that needed a speedy solution. If Set took control of the major cities on Muratio Star then his rebellion wouldn't be able to be suppressed even if they released Abraxas. Yet the nobles still objected to going through the shortcut that was the Valley of Darkness.

'The reason Kuhwen is taking this risk....'

If Set's revolt succeeded then Kuhwen would be 100% dead anyway. Leaving an heir to Horus alive would just be allowing another rebellion. The situation was so dangerous so how could Kuhwen wait for the volunteer army to arrive?

‘These guys are worried about their own lives instead of Kuhwen’s. The viewpoint of the nobles and Horus is different. Even if Set’s revolt succeeded, there is no guarantee that these nobles would be killed. The power of the nobles is required in order to reign over the villages so Set might try to reconcile with them instead of killing them. However, if the expedition to the Valley of Darkness is wiped out then the nobles will definitely die. Therefore the Valley of Darkness is more dangerous than the rebellion in the nobles’ minds.’

This was the real reason why the nobles opposed the expedition. Kuhwen was young but intelligent so he probably knew the hearts of the nobles.

This was also why Kuhwen couldn’t treat the nobles harshly. The nobles were Kuhwen’s only supporters at the moment. But there was a chance they could leave the expedition to join Set’s camp and become an enemy. Therefore the nobles possessed a complex position despite Kuhwen being the next Horus.

‘But in this situation, they won’t be the first ones to die. It really is crazy. It isn’t possible to talk to the nobles when their heads are buried in the sand. At this rate, it won’t be possible to arrive at the Valley of Darkness in time let alone their destination. No, this mood will be a problem even if we arrive at the Valley of Darkness.’

Ark examined the soldiers with pained eyes. The soldiers were sweating in the mud while the nobles riding camels were whining.

The soldiers’ morale was low from the nobles’ attitude so this would be dangerous once they reached the Valley of Darkness. Besides, the person called Jed was just a human so the guards ignored him.

Ark was the Elim’s Heir so he commanded the soldier’s respect but they were affected by the nobles’ attitude towards Ark. They didn’t express it plainly like the nobles but their attitude was still impudent.

‘Whether they like it or not, I have to lead the soldiers through the Valley of Darkness and fight the rebels beyond that. But it is impossible to move the troops with this atmosphere. Right now it is possible thanks to Kuhwen but it will be no use in the confusion of battle. The soldiers need to seriously consider me as a commander and follow me in battle. Tactics are an essential part of leading soldiers. But that isn’t the only thing required. I need to get rid of the root cause behind the soldiers’ dislike. I have to change the nobles’ attitudes.’

The problem was how to break the nobles.

‘But.....’

Ark worried for a while before turning around quickly. He looked at Tori following in the rear with Ferguson, A and B and smiled.

‘The most direct way is to scare them.’

“Event?”

Ferguson blinked his eyes. Ark nodded and replied.

“Yes, I don’t understand it that well but we seemed to have entered another world and time after being sucked into the black hole. It is a world thousands of years ago. We seem to have entered a different dimension due to the influence of the black hole.”

“A different dimension? Is this like the Netherworld in New World?”

“Eh? Netherworld in New World? You guys also played New World?”

“Of course. Huhuhu! We.....”

“W-what is this brat talking about?”

Ferguson quickly covered A’s mouth.

"I don't know! We haven't played New World. Netherworld....yes, we saw in on a broadcast."

He seemed suspicious but it wasn't important right now.

"Yes, if you look at it from the view of a user then it is similar to the Netherworld of New World. But the system applied is different. You guys, didn't your equipment and items disappear once you entered this world? That's because this world is thousands of years ago. You guys were using equipment and items made thousands of years in the future. It can't exist in this world so it disappeared. Even the spaceship that you were riding disappeared."

That was the conclusion Ark came to. It was why all of Ark's items disappeared except for the Elim's Helmet and Heir's Sword. Unlike other items, those two items were originally used by the Elim. It wasn't strange that Jed would have it. From such a perspective, it was ridiculous that Baius' Shield would be lost but Jed was just the Elim's Heir.

Anyway.....

"What? This world doesn't have it?"

"Then can you find it?"

"T-that is ridiculous! Do you know how much money those equipment were worth? I invested my entire fortune into those equipment. And that spaceship was prepared with the insurance from the previous spaceship. If I lose this ship then the insurance payout will be terrible!"

Ferguson, A and B screamed in a panic. Ark watched them with irritated eyes and continued.

"Listen to a person's words until the end! Like I said, we lost items and the ship because they don't exist in this world. But that doesn't mean we can't

regain the items and ship.”

“No? There’s a way?”

“Yes, it ‘isn’t here.’ But it still exists in the right time. In other words, if we return to our original time then the ship and items can be found again. In order to do this, we must meet the conditions.”

“Conditions?”

“Moving back to the original time zone.”

“Back to the original....that is simple isn’t it? We just have to die.”

In fact, Ark also had such a plan. The Fairy hadn’t been renewed after coming into this world. No, he hadn’t even seen a Fairy. So if he died he should appear at the last Fairy. In other words, Turan in his original time. If Ark’s hypothesis was correct then he was likely to find his lost items after resurrecting. However there were two problems with this.

The first was that there was no way of knowing if the spaceship that entered the black hole with him would be restored. And the second was that there was no guarantee he could recover the items. If the equipment didn’t return when he died then they would be lost.

‘That is something to consider in the worst case scenario.....’

“T-that’s right.”

Ferguson sighed with relief and nodded. He had no intention of committing suicide.

“As I said, if we return to our original time then it is likely that we can find our items and spaceship. And I already know a way. Right now I have a quest. If I successfully complete this quest then I can get a clue to return to my original time. Then it will be possible to find the spaceship and items that disappeared.”

“R-really?”

“My words are 90% certain. But there’s one problem. It won’t be easy to complete this quest based on the atmosphere. It is hard to explain but there will be a lot of difficulties. The nobles being like this is a problem. So you guys have to be helpful. This quest isn’t just a matter involving one person.”

“W-what do you mean?”

“We aren’t that helpful....”

“No, there is no need to think about it. If we lost our ship and items then we will be no different from beggars. If it is to recover that then we help out without grumbling!”

“Are you serious?”

“As expected from Ferguson!”

Ark laughed as he looked at Ferguson, A and B.

“You promised.”

Ferguson, A and B couldn’t imagine what this would result in.

“Kurai-nim.”

Ark approached a complaining noble. Wearing ornaments carved with Egyptian style paintings, Kurai was the highest ranking noble in Kuhwen’s entourage. And he was the mastermind behind Ark’s bullying. Naturally he didn’t look beautiful to Ark. Kurai looked at him with an offended expression.

“What is it?”

“The procession of nobles is slower than the speed of the soldiers. This is detrimental to the soldiers’ morale and we might fall behind schedule.”

“Hoh, that is a fairly heavy handed tone.”

Kurai said with a strange expression.

“So what are you going to do? Do you intend to run behind Kuhwen again? Ah, how frightening. You are the commander so I should listen to you. You’re lashing out. Isn’t that right?”

“Kuk kuk kuk, that’s right.”

The nobles around them laughed. That was also reflected in the eyes of a few soldiers in the area. Then three men approached from behind Ark.

“Ark, are these the people causing you problems?”

The three monkeys gazed at the nobles with serious eyes. They were Ferguson and his brothers A and B. Ferguson, A and B formed fists with their hands.

“Should we take care of these guys?”

“What?”

Ark then turned his body. And he shouted sharply at Ferguson.

“You dare do something like this when I’m here? Do you know who you are talking to? They are the Murat nobility that have power throughout the galaxy. Savage monkeys aren’t allowed to see them!”

“W-hat are you saying? This is against the agreement!”

Ferguson stuttered after he was hit by an uppercut. But Ark stepped on A and B before Ferguson’s words ended and exclaimed.

“What is different? Yes, I was complaining a little bit. Because I was mad at the nobles! Yet how could such a thing happen? They are nobles who control the seat of power. Does it make sense that some monkeys came to hit them?”

Puck puck puck! Puck puck puck! Puck puck puck!

Fists and feet poured onto Ferguson, A and B. Ark's violence didn't stop despite the protests of ignorance.

The Murat nobles were baffled.

"Yes! Okay! Frankly, there were also one or two times I was so mad that I wanted to bury the nobles! No, I pushed it down and endured it but there is a bitter taste! But you're not allowed to do that! They are the nobility! So even I clenched my teeth firmly! Yet you monkeys don't know your social position and attempted to do something?"

Kwok kwok kwok! Kwok kwok kwok! Kwok kwok kwok!

"Ouch! Ouch! W-wait a minute! S-save me!"

"This bastard, are you multiple? Multiple personality?"

"Ugh! Dammit! If it is like this then I won't endure it either!"

Ferguson, A and B ran towards Ark with bloody noses. However Ferguson, A and B were basically naked aliens. Meanwhile Ark was equipped with a full set of armour and his lightsaber. No, he didn't even bother to use his lightsaber.

"What? You want to try me? Haven't your spirits been rearranged yet?"

Ferguson was hit by a storm of kicks from Ark. That was it for the three monkeys' insignificant resistance. However Ark's violence was just beginning. Ark continued aiming his fist at them as the three monkeys fell down.

The Murat nobles looked on anxiously.

"Now will you test my nature? Didn't I tell you? I have a ton of stress piled up! I endured it firmly despite wanting to bury those nobles! No, I want to run up to them right now and turn them into bloody rice cakes. But I can't! They are the nobility! Because they are nobles! Yet you stood up and threatened them!"

Why? Why? Why? Why?"

Sseok sseok! Sseok sseok! Sseok sseok sseok!

It was the sound of the three monkeys being kneaded. The nobles didn't dare step forward as Ark spoke in a voice full of resentment. It was natural. His bloody fists made Ark look truly evil! An evil spirit! Devil! His reckless violence stopped once the three monkeys' faces were literally changed into bloody rice cakes.

The Murat nobles were trembling in fear.

"Phew....."

Ark sighed and shook his head. He rested for a bit before looking at the nobles with a refreshed expression. The blood on his face from the monkeys made his smile look even creepier.

"I'm sorry. These savage monkeys didn't realize their place so I stopped them....please don't pay too much regard to what I just did. Let's get back to what I was saying before I was riled up."

"Eh? No, t-that's not....."

The nobles stuttered and looked like lost goldfish when faced with Ark.

"Anyway, like I was saying. I hope your speed will quicken a bit more. And perhaps the amount of complaints reduced? Every time I hear it, something seems to snap in my head....ah, no this is a mistake. It will cause problems to the soldiers' morale every time they hear it. I might be an ignorant human but I am still in charge of the expedition. These words....ah, no this is another mistake. I have to be polite."

Ark wiped the blood on his face with his sleeve and spoke firmly. The nobles didn't answer. It wasn't because they were ignoring Ark. They had ran away on

the camel before Ark's words even ended. Ark glanced at the frantic nobles and laughed.

"These guys needed a good scare to listen to me."

This was what Ark had aimed for. The people originally didn't agree with him because they didn't feel fear. He needed to maximize their fear of being beaten. Ark used the three monkeys in order to induce such fear in the nobles. The nobles cherished their lives so this would have a large effect on the nobles.

-I'll endure it for now. But I'll let him know how it tastes like. I'll show them what cruel things I can do! Your safety won't be guaranteed after that. So be careful!

The voices of the nobles entered Ark's ear. But on the surface, the monkeys were punished for being rude to the nobles. Of course they couldn't tolerate it but in the end the monkeys were the ones punished. If the nobles were intimidated then it was no problem!

"Y-you bastard....."

The one of the bloody rice cakes lifted their head and growled. The face was crushed but it seemed to be Ferguson based on the body.

"You....from the beginning....thought of this....."

"Ah, are you okay? Thanks for the trouble."

"T-trouble....you say that now....."

"What did I do? I just did as promised. Are you going back on your word now that you suffered? And is this just for my benefit? Eh? If this quest is successful then you will also get your ship and items back. To be honest, I didn't have to go through this trouble. You are the one who dragged my ship into the black hole."

"You....perhaps....you've been holding on to your hostility to get revenge....."

“I wouldn’t say that but....”

“What, what the?”

Ferguson, A and B cried out angrily as they ran up to Ark. No, when they were about to run up. Ark frowned while staring at them.

“Think before you act. Eh? Anger surges inside me whenever I think about the black hole. And there wouldn’t be a problem if I kill you now. No, it would be rather helpful. The nobles would become even more frightened. Shouldn’t you be thankful that you were only punched? So please stop talking drivel and endure it with your physical strength.”

“P-physical strength.....”

Ferguson, A and B’s mouths dropped open at Ark’s last words.

“P-perhaps....you plan to do such a thing again?”

“Of course. Don’t you know the mindset of those nobles? This will only have a big effect for one day. So take care in the future as well.”

Ark smiled pleasantly and turned around. Ark made it clear that he still had a lot of negative feelings remaining towards Ferguson’s party.

If it wasn’t for Ferguson then Ark wouldn’t have entered such a world. And it was still unknown whether he could find his team safely to return to the original world. He had been dragged into the black hole because of Ferguson. Of course, that wasn’t the only reason why Ferguson’s party was turned into bloody rice cakes.....

Even if he pretended to forget it 3 seconds later, Ark was the type to store a grudge for 300 years. He intended to pay back this debt many times. While Ark was busy thinking.

“Cough! H-Hyung-nim?”

“I’m scared! This bastard, he is scary!”

“His actions and name is exactly the same!”

“D-don’t cry! Don’t panic! He already said he isn’t that Ark! And we are not the same as before either! We have to listen to him now but it will be different once we return and get our equipment back!”

Ark stopped at Ferguson’s words. It wasn’t due to hearing what their actions would be once they returned to the original world.

‘His actions and name is exactly the same? Is he talking about the name Ark? That reminds me, they asked if I was Ark from New World when we first met on Tatuine. And now they knew about the Netherworld of New World. Based on their words, those guys seem to have met Ark in New World. These guys definitely know me.’

Ark considered before turning around with a pleasant smile. Ferguson, A and B’s bloody forms were embracing each other. Looking at the scene gave him an intense feeling of deja vu! There was no doubt. Ark had witnessed this scene multiple times in New World. The features were different but they were the same three users!

“.....Buksil?”

Ferguson flinched.

“.....Ulmeok? Sapjil?”

Brothers A and B subsequently flinched as a reaction.

They looked at Ark’s face and stuttered.

“H-how did you know those names? D-don’t tell me? I-it can’t be. No? Is it?”

“.....It is like I thought?”

Ark muttered as he bit his lip. He approached the bloody Ferguson, A and B. A cold and eerie voice flowed from Ark's mouth.

"We finally met. Buk-Ui-Sap! You ungrateful pigs!"

"Eh....all of a sudden."

Ark coughed and started talking. 30 people and 50 guards were gathered in front of him.

"Pretty soon we will arrive in the Valley of darkness. There is no need to explain how dangerous he is. After crossing the Valley of Darkness, there will also be a conflict with Set's rebels. It won't be easy but we have to accomplish this mission. If we fail then there will be no hope for Muratio Star. However, we're not ready to conquer the upcoming trials."

Ark stopped talking for a moment and examined the approaching soldiers.

"The important thing is cooperating with your colleagues rather than individual ability. And working together is formed through bonds. You are soldiers and guards so you've undergone training at a village. But from now, you aren't guards or soldiers anymore. You are an expedition with one purpose. Therefore it is expected that you will undergo joint training now. But we all know that there isn't a lot of time. Therefore you will undergo training simultaneously while marching. You can't allow our pace to slow down while training."

The three suns were shining down on the steaming hot desert. They trained even when their breaths were clogged up. Despite that, the training didn't stop while marching. Naturally there were a few complaints. But not one of the complaining soldiers looked at Ark.

The reason why.....

This was sudden but Ark had succeeded as an entrepreneur and warrior in New World. Ark created a triangular trade route that was the nucleus of trading. But it was difficult for Ark to participate directly in the business.

After putting the shares in order, Ark withdrew to the position of honorary chairman and left the practical operation to Sid. But he received shocking information from Sid after starting Galaxian. He reported that some merchants in Ark's operation suddenly disappeared. Ark flew to the warehouse location and looked around before finding a message.

—We have found our freedom. We have sold some goods and received the proper amount of wages from when we were exploited. Don't look for us. No, you won't find us!

Ark had trembled in fury. It was continuously nurtured whenever Ark thought about the merchants that disappeared. They embezzles his money and disappeared! The merchant had sold off 3,000 gold worth of goods. And that wasn't the only damage that Ark's business received.

The products were unable to be delivered by the due date and he had to pay a penalty sum of 1,500 gold. They suddenly went missing so Ark and Sid had to stay up for several nights fixing the problem.

Their betrayal boiled in his heart! After settling the problem, Ark begun to look for the merchants. The master code determined that their characters hadn't been deleted yet. However they never connected to the game from then on. Their characters were still left in the server and Ark couldn't determine their personal information. If he wanted to know their phone number or address then he needed to submit a request for it.

....Anyway.

Ark felt regret whenever he thought about it. He never imagined that he

would meet them in a place like this. The place where they met was Muratio Star. Ferguson, A and B. They were the ones who pocketed money from his business in New World. Buksil, Ulmeok and Sapjil who were called the three pig brothers. That's right. The identity of the three monkeys was the three pig brothers. The moment Ark discovered their identity.

■, ■, ■.

The 3 monkey brothers turned into mosaics. The soldiers' eyes were focused on Ark when he had been talking about the training. They were focused on the three mosaics piled up next to Ark. Even their original appearance couldn't be determined anymore. The even scarier thing was that Ark didn't even lift one eyebrow when committing his actions.

Complaints? Such a thing was impossible.

“Why are you replying?”

“Huh? Ah! Yes! We will do our best!”

The soldiers shouted with surprise after Ark's question.

“And incidentally, the schedule is a little bit slow so I would like to raise the marching speed. Don't disappoint me, eh?”

“We will do as you want. Follow. For Muratio Star and His Royal Highness!”

Kurai and the other nobles nodded in agreement. Controlling the public through fear. This would cause many problems in the long term but Ark would only be in this world for a short time. There was nothing to worry about once he completed the quest and returned to his original world. That's how Ark was able to completely control the expedition one day after departing.

-New special stat [Leadership] has been created.

<This stat has been produced by commanding 90% of the troops. Leadership is sometimes more important than strategy in a battle with troops. No matter how wonderful a strategy is devised, it is insignificant if the troops don't move properly.

The higher your Leadership stat, the more soldiers will follow your commands. There won't be a large difference in the early stages but you will gradually see a difference when leading soldiers.

Leadership will rise every time you discipline your troops. However, going overboard with discipline can make the soldiers' morale fall (Leadership +10)>

A new special stat! However Ark wasn't satisfied yet.

'This isn't enough to heal the wound I received!'

Ark gazed at the people he turned into mosaics. Confusion spread over the faces of Kuhwen and Tot who were watching.

"Didn't Ark seem to have changed his character as well as his name?"

"I-it seems like it. This guy....."

Then Basak cut in with a flushed face.

"Don't the two of you know? Hyung-nim has a mild nature. When the aristocrats or guards ignored him, he just endured it silently. How can his

personality suddenly change after losing his memories? Hyung-nim....Hyung-nim is determined. He knows that the fate of Kuhwen and Muratio Star is hanging on this moment so he has decided to be the devil!"

Basak sobbed as he spoke.

"Even if he suffers criticism! Even if he is blamed! Even if he is feared by the nobles and soldiers! He will still do it. Hyung-nim will live his life in disguise! The monkeys didn't resist because they understood Hyung-nim's noble intentions. They are his confidants! Keok Hyung-nim, I'm a guy dumber than a monkey! Hyung-nim!"

-Basak's loyalty has increased by 200.....

Basak's loyalty rose by itself. However the hamster who stuck beside Kuhwen while playing the role of a pet knew the truth.

'Stop playing around. That is his true character! He isn't disguised as a devil but is the devil itself. Hah those pitiful monkeys, they don't understand but their lives have ended now that they're caught.'

The march continued like that.

Space 5: Valley of Darkness

SPACE 5. Valley of Darkness

“Pant pant pant! Pant pant pant!”

Ark panted as he looked around. The Valley of Darkness was surrounded by dark brown rocky mountains. They had steadily marched approximately 70 kilometres for 2 days and finally entered the Valley of Darkness. Ark's impression as he stepped foot into the Valley of Darkness that caused the nobles to jump even hearing the name....

‘What? It isn’t that big of a deal?’

The nobles were so fearful that Ark thought it was a monster infested place. That’s why he turned the 3 monkey brothers into bloody rice cakes as a form of military discipline. But it felt like he could relax once they actually arrived at the Valley of Darkness.

A monster had emerged. However it was only a small monster level 60~70. It would be simple even if a lot came out at once. They weren’t enough to even act as a food supplement.

‘Now we can get a good night’s sleep after marching through scorching sunshine....’

It was a relaxing feeling. But that was Ark’s mistake.

“The sun is starting to set. Hyung-nim, be careful. Now the Valley of Darkness will show its true form. The beings inside the Valley of Darkness hide from Ra, Shu and Tefnut. Without Ra, Shu and Tefnut’s protection, night time is when we should be most afraid.”

Basak grabbed his shield with a tense expression as it became evening. Even the nobles and soldiers were the same. They became increasingly silent and their faces became heavy as it became darker.

And....they began to appear.

Chi chi chi chi! Chi chi chi chi!

It was enough to shave their nerves away! An extravagant number of creatures started to climb out. At the same time, the soldiers started moaning and screaming.

“A-Ant! The Great Ant!”

The Great Ant. Just like the name, it was a monster that looked like an ant and was the size of a person. The mob of ants covered the entire valley.

“Huk! Circle formation! Organize a circle formation!”

He was glad that he forcefully trained the soldiers. The soldiers scared of Ark quickly obeyed his order and formed a circle. Even if the reaction was a little late, they managed to form it before the group of Ants swarmed over them. Once the battle formation was used, Ark had a certain degree of space to recover.

“Launch the plasma bullets ahead of you!”

The soldiers lifted the swords in unison at the command. The weapon in their hand was a curved sword based on the Shotel called ‘?’ It was a sword used in Ancient Egypt in order to avoid the enemies’ shields. But that was a trick. These were weapons that the Murat created based on the Ancient Egyptians but the real use was something separate.

Pajijik!

A sphere of light formed in the centre of the ‘?’ causing sparks. The light

sphere shot out from the soldiers' swords. This was the real usage! The '?' was a sword but electromagnetic energy could be accelerated in order to shoot plasma bullets at the enemy. The shocking truth had become clear!

Kwa kwa kwa kwa! Kwa kwa kwa kwa! Kwa kwa kwa kwa!

Anyway, the power of the plasma bullet was no joke. It contained the destructive power equivalent to a RPG. The speed was faster than a RPG and there was also a blade so it could be used as an all-round weapon! This was the natural weapon of the Murat soldiers as they rode camels through the desert.

However.....

"Dammit, this isn't enough."

Ark looked at the place where the flames passed and bit his lip. The soldiers' plasma bombing had smashed 100 Ants. But that wasn't even 10% of the number of Ants. There were still Ants crawling out from the stone mountains. It was literally a colony of ants!

"What? These guys? How many of them are hiding?"

"The late Horus mobilized troops many times in order to subdue the Valley of Darkness. But he judged that the Ants could multiply infinitely and gave up. It is impossible for us to wipe out the Ants. Fortunately the Ants are monsters who only take action at night. We just need to hold out until morning!"

"H-hold up until morning in this state?"

Kukukuku....kwa kwa kwa kwa!

The expedition force cried out at the same time as they were enveloped by the Ants. Once the close combat fighting started, the different between the guards and soldiers started showing. The guards instantly blocked the attacks while the soldiers were pushed back. Several guards were covered by the liquid

squirted by the Ants and fell down petrified.

‘Oh my god! Those guys will never end? We have to continue fighting until morning? Damn, I am an amnesia patient! How would I know this information? Why didn’t Kuhwen or Tot tell me such important information? If I knew beforehand then I would’ve opposed like the nobles as well! No, now isn’t the time to think about that. We have already stepped foot into the Valley of Darkness at night. If the formation collapses then we will be instantly wiped out!’

“Khafra Fencing 3rd style! Galaxy Sword!”

Ark transferred his body and wielded his sword. The sword flew forward like a storm. And Ark plunged towards the Ants thought the opened defense line.

Wiing! Wiing! Buuuuong!

There were continuous explosions of light. Green fluid gushed out around Ark as the Ants died. Then he was hit by a transparent liquid launched from an Ant behind him.

-You have been hit by the Ant’s formic acid!

Formic acid is a liquid formed within the Ants that can cause a strong feeling of numbness.

The formic acid has paralyzed your body for 10 seconds>

“Keok! T-this....”

It was the reason why the soldiers fell down! The Ant's body generated formic acid which numbed Ark's body. Meanwhile the Ants crossed over the corpses and started to cut Ark with their small molars. No, the moment they were about to!

“Hyung-nim!”

Basak cried out and plunged towards him. He raised his shield with both hands and shouted.

“I won’t let one hair on Hyung-nim’s head be touched as long as I still live!
Burning Shield!”

Pepepepeng! Kwa kwa kwa kwa!

A huge explosion occurred around the shield. The shells of the Ants surrounding him sizzled and they shrieked while running away. Ark learned this a while ago but Basak was the person who succeeded in obtaining the role of Guardian. That’s why Basak plunged in when Ark was in danger.

Apart from various other shield skills, his guardian defense skill known as ‘Impregnable Wall’ had reached Lv. 5 Master. Basak interrupted the Ants’ offensive and prevented all attacks from hitting Ark with his shield.

“Hyung-nim, are you okay?”

‘Damn, why couldn’t I meet this guy in the original world?’

Basak was a NPC that only existed in this time zone. He was valuable but couldn’t come along when Ark left. But now wasn’t the time for thoughts like that. If he threw away this chance then it might not be possible to return to his original time. No, he didn’t know if he could get back the items and ship that he lost. Now he only needed to focus on remaining alive.

“Thank you. I am fine.”

Ark raised his body after the paralysis wore off. And he looked over the battlefield with Basak. The Ants were covering the environment in a sea of black but the troops were faring quite well. The reason why that was possible was surprisingly due to the nobles.

“Come out, Shire!”

“Rune Carving, Crest of Protection Om!”

“Rune Carving, Crest of Grace Phantom Veil!”

The nobles drew crests from light in the air! Once again, Ark’s Rune Carving was originally a technique of the Murat. The thing that Ark didn’t know was that only nobles could use the Shire. A Murat who could use Shire meant that they were a noble.

Anyway, the nobles used Rune Carving!

-Rune Carving: Om has been used.

<The defense of all allies within 100 metres will increase by 50% for 1 hour>

-Rune Carving: Phantom Veil has been used.

<The evasion ability of all allies within 100 metres will increase by 50% for 1 hour....>

Various messages rose as the nobles activated the skill and used buffs. The

stats of Ark, Basak and the troops rose! The nobles also used runes that did wide area damage to the Ants as well as the Ikram rune to create hell hounds. However their technique had a higher rating than Ark's so three or four hell hounds were created from each corpse.

‘I thought they were just nobles but.....’

As expected from the Murat's aristocracy. The higher position Murat could use stronger runes. Therefore there was one person with the strongest runes!

“Rune Carving, Ankh!”

A huge rune floated over Kuhwen's head. It was the Ankh rune in the form of a cross shape!

-Rune Carving: Ankh has been used.

<All allies within 500 metres will have their health recover by 1,000. There will be an addition recovery of 500 health over 3 minutes>

This was the rune used by Prince Kuhwen! This was the crucial reason why the soldiers could hold up against the human wave tactics of the Ants.

But there was a fatal weakness to this skill. Recovery skills sharply increased the hostility of the monsters. The Ants that were attacking the soldiers shrieked and suddenly rushed towards Kuhwen.

“The formation on the right side has collapsed!”

“The Ants have entered the formation!”

Ark flinched and turned around. He saw the Ants ignoring the soldiers and rushing towards Kuhwen.

“Damn! That charge is dangerous! Basak, follow me!” Sonic Sword!”

Ark pushed back the Ants and ran towards Kuhwen. But Ark could only travel a short distance before being blocked by another group of Ants. It was impossible.....

“I won’t let you touch one hair on Kuhwen!”

“We are here!”

“Go! Ohhhhhh! Monkey Barrier!”

Ferguson, A and B formed a barrier in front of Kuhwen. If he had to explain it, Tori and Ferguson’s party also had a critical role.

Tori has no combat ability so he was given to Kuhwen. He might be XX but his appearance looked like a hamster. In addition to cats and dogs, it was a common species sold as pets. Therefore Kuhwen was quite satisfied with Tori.

The problem was Ferguson, A and B. Ferguson, A and B were fairly good users. When he met them instead of his team members, Ark wasn’t disappointed and was actually glad. They were stupid but had combat power so it was possible to use them. However there were two problems with this.

The first was the nobles’ opposition. Ark was a person from the future but he still looked like Jed unlike Ferguson. Their original form also looked like a monkey so it was shocking. Therefore the nobles opposed giving weapons to an unknown alien species.

And the second more decisive reason was.....

‘What? These guys?’

Ark persuaded the nobles and managed to give Ferguson’s party weapons.

Ark wouldn't let them refuse their plan. He knew the proficiency of Ferguson, A and B.

'They kept on pouring out bullets excessively against the Kero Clan on the grey planet. Their combat power was really large at the time so I didn't argue against bringing them along. Yet the reason they seemed strong was due to their equipment.'

The monkeys' secret had become clear! The monkeys could fight but they relied on their weapons. They could demonstrate the power equivalent to high level guards. But their abilities now wasn't enough to overcome the nobles' opposition to enter the war. Ark gave them a different mission instead.

"You guys don't have to fight in the battle. You will have armour instead of weapon. Put on this armour and act as the shield for Prince Kuhwen."

"N-no weapons and just a shield?"

"The shield is extra. There is no need for weapons. So just focus on defense."

"T-then are you telling us to sacrifice our bodies!"

"That's right."

Ark smiled and nodded.

"I told you. Don't you want to return to our original world? Prince Kuhwen is the core figure in this quest. It will be a problem if he dies. We absolutely must not let him die....you understand? If Kuhwen is damaged at all then after the battle you will receive one injury for each damage. Keep this in mind. I still haven't forgotten about you misappropriating my funds or the anchor in my spaceship."

That's why Ferguson bravely (?) stepped in front of the Ants. One hit from the Ants would deal with 150~200 damage. In other words, if Kuhwen was hit then

Ferguson would receive 150~200 damage from Ark later.

Snap!

“Ugh! So painful!”

“E-endure it! It is better to be hit by the Ants!”

“Yes, I can’t be turned into a mosaic by Ark-nim again! Endure!”

Ferguson, A and B bit their lips and endured the Ants. Please pay attention to the fact that Ferguson was calling Ark ‘Ark-nim’ now. They had been under Ark’s control in New World for two years. They won freedom and escaped only to be captured by Ark again once they entered the galaxy. They were like Son Goku in the palm of Buddha. When thinking back to the beginning, Ferguson’s problem was that they chose Son Goku’s species.....Anyway Ferguson, A and B once again became Ark’s slaves the moment they became mosaics.

This was destiny! Destiny!

‘It isn’t possible! As long as we play a game, it is impossible to escape from this man’s hand!’

And.....

“Phew, good work.”

“Ah, no. It isn’t that hard!”

“We are Ark-nim’s loyal monkeys!”

“Please look favourably on us! If possible, forget about the old memories!”

Ferguson, A and B raised bloody thumbs towards Ark. The monkeys were unfortunate but had to accept their destiny. Anyway, that wasn’t Ark’s business at the moment.....

‘The formation is getting worse.’

Ark surveyed the battlefield and bit his lip.

They were only able to stop the Ants with Kuhwen and the nobles' support. After fighting for several hours, 10 guards had died and that left a heavy burden on the remaining soldiers.

'But there is no room to give up. The only way is to endure. This circle formation is difficult for that. It will become disadvantageous over time as the soldiers fight without any breaks. We have to throw the weight on the side where the Ants are mostly coming from. The defense area will narrow and there will be some room for the soldiers to rest.'

"Change the formation to two circles!"

Ark commanded and the soldiers switched to a two circle formation. This formation changed from \circ to two rows of circles $\circ\circ$. There were limited troops to form two lines so the formation size was smaller but it allowed the soldiers inside the defense to rest for a short moment. Of course, the soldiers on the inside location weren't just sitting back and relaxing.

"Plasma shot!"

Kwa kwa kwa! Kwa kwa kwa! Kwa kwa kwa!

There was a continuous flood of lights. They continuously swapped with the soldiers in the front and poured out plasma bullets. There was a harmony in the front with the soldiers who fought as they swapped back and rested while firing plasma bullets. The bodies of the Ants piled up like mountains after that tactic was used. And every corpse was converted into experience.

-Your level has risen!

Ark and the soldiers levelled up. But Ark didn't even have room to confirm the messages. Like Basak said, the number of Ants in the Valley of Darkness was

infinite. If they kill 10 then 10 would replace them, 100 then 100 would come back without any room to breathe. Their health was maintained thanks to Kuhwen but they were became really tired. Luckily the rotation period of Muratio Star was very short.

They had been fighting the Ants for 6 hours.

“L-Light!”

“The suns are coming up!”

“Ooh! For the honour of Ra, Shu and Tefnut!”

The soldiers shouted with thrilled voices. The scene of the 3 suns floating above the brown mountains was reflected in their eyes. When the light hit them, the Ants screamed and scattered. And peace returned like a lie.

“Suns.....!”

Ark’s heart beat forcefully. The Murat were a species that spread to different civilizations over thousands of years. He thought it was amazing that such a species worshipped the suns as gods but now he saw why.

But the damage received was so large that he couldn’t rejoice. Ark had ran around giving support for 6 hours but 3 guards and 14 soldiers died for a total of 17 casualties. Moreover, this was just the beginning of the Valley of Darkness.

He now understood why the soldiers and nobles freaked out just hearing the name Valley of Darkness.

‘But if we change the path now then all the major cities of Muratio Star will be taken over before we reach Tri-Force. No matter how hard it is, we just have to overcome it. There is no other place to go but forward.’

“Check your gear quickly!”

Ark shouted to the soldiers that survived.

"I know you're tired from staying up all night and fighting. However when the sun is up is the only time for us to march. We can't be ambushed by the Ants. So quickly put everything in order and march. Then you can have a break."

Ark encouraged the tired soldiers to advance immediately. This time the soldiers and nobles didn't complain at all.

Unlike when they were travelling through the leisurely desert but now they were facing the dreaded Ants with their survival at stake. That's why they marched without any delay! March! March!

They only rested for 1 hour around evening. When the sun set, the Ants' assault would begin. They marched without a break during the day before facing the colony of Ants at night. Before night came, Ark would assemble the formation in a favourable terrain to face the Ants.

And when day broke then they marched once again! March! March!

Muratio Star had a day length of 12 hours so the soldiers looked like zombies after 2 days passed. However they never complained. It was inevitable if they wanted to live and Ark also showed his tenacity. Ark didn't even take the 1 hour break.

Naturally there was a reason for it. Once again, Muratio Star was the home for the Murat's Elim. And Ark was travelling with the Elim's spiritual mentor Tot. In the original world Xanax had disappeared so this was a great chance for Ark to learn some Elim skills.

'If the quest proceeds then I can return to the original world but there is no guarantee it will succeed or fail. And if it is successful then I will have to leave this place. I don't know if I can take items from here but there is a high probability that I can keep experience and skills. So I have to use this

opportunity to learn. I can sleep at any time!’

Ark started skill hunting after getting that idea. Of course he went to Tot first.

“Never losing the will to learn even under these circumstances is indeed an attitude worthy of an Elim’s Heir. Okay. Originally more procedures were required but the situation being as it is, I am willing to teach the Elim’s techniques. Now, take a look!”

Tot narrowed his eyes and stretched out his arm. And a stone in the area floated up into the air. The stone moved in circles as Tot moved his hands and laughed.

“How about it? This is a power that has been transmitted through generations of the Elim, Psychokinesis. Isn’t it good?”

.....He had already reached intermediate level in this skill.

“What? You can use it already? No, didn’t you just recently become an Elim? Uhh, you really are fearful. You awakened the power of Force and Psychokinesis as soon as you became the Elim’s Heir! My eyes were definitely correct. I knew I detected a strong Force within you. It is like you are really destined to become an Elim.”

He sat down in a parody of Yoda.

“Isn’t there something else?”

“Something else? What did you say?”

“Doesn’t Tot-nim have any other technique?”

“Then what about Elim’s Heart? That changes Mana into Force.....”

“You also understand that?”

“Uhh, you really are dreadful to realize such things alone. If you know that

then I don't have anything else to teach. I am the spiritual mentor so I only teach things regarding the mental area of Force. There is another teacher for sword techniques. Why else did I make you the Elim's successor? You can visit the other mentors after the rebellion is stopped."

Tot said with a hurt expression. On the other hand, Ark's expectant expression turned to disappointment.

"Sheesh you brat, why are you looking like that?"

Tot waved his hands with irritation. And the stone floating in the air shattered?

"Eh? W-What is that? That occurrence just then?"

"What? This? This....eh? You don't know this? Hehehe! I see. You don't know! Huhuhu, that's right. It is impossible for someone who just became an Elim's Heir to know everything. Phew. That's lucky. No, that is different. Hrmm hrmm, good. If you really want to then I'll teach you this technique."

Tot said with a mock serious expression. Since then, Ark didn't sleep and learnt the new skill that Tot taught him. Day and night changed in the Valley of Darkness and he finally registered the skill after one revolution.

-A new skill (Occupation Restricted ☆☆☆) has been learnt.

Break Kinesis (Users, Active): You learnt the skill after travelling through time and space and meeting the Elim's spiritual mentor Tot. Break Kinesis is a variation of Psychokinesis and deals damage to the

target or enemy. Force is used to deal a cohesive blow to the target so the damage isn't large but it is a technique with a high probability of hitting. This technique is only available for those who know Psychokinesis and needs to be learnt through a mentor.

<All objects close to the target will receive a blow>

Force consumption: 70

He was able to confirm the effect immediately.

“Break Kinesis!”

He used it on the Ants once they attacked and he lost his balance. When the skill was triggered, the Ant's leg exploded and it stumbled. It was 1/10th of the damage dealt by a sword. It seemed very weak compared to the Force consumed but it was possible to activate just by looking at the target and could be used for surprise attacks.

Ark's skill hunting didn't end there.

“You want to learn some runes?”

Kuhwen asked with a surprised expression.

The rune itself was meaningless. The rune was just a vehicle to manifest the power of the Shire. And the Shire is something that only the Murat nobility could use. This power was passed down through their descendants. However, Ark had found a Pharaoh on Beltana and absorbed the Shire. And he had learnt

the Ikram, Immortal and Kuon runes. In other words, he would have no trouble learning new runes!

And the Murat nobles helped through Rune Carving. But the nobles didn't have a good impression of Ark so he went to Kuhwen from the beginning.

'Huhuhu, the rune Kuhwen used against the Ants are a lot stronger than the nobles. Isn't it almost like a large recovery skill? It would be a perfect jackpot even if I only learn the rune to restore 1,000 health!'

But Galaxian wasn't that superficial of a game.

"I don't mean to be derogatory but it is already amazing that a human can use the Shire. It isn't difficult to slowly teach the runes. It isn't a secret if you know can use the Shire. I would like to give you all the runes if possible but the amount of Shire you have is too minimal. It is impossible for you to manifest the Shire with the rune that I use."

Kuhwen explained about the Shire and runes. Ark hadn't paid attention so far but the Shire also had a numerical value like mana or mental power. It was decided by the number of times Shire had been absorbed and most nobles had absorbed it 20 times. Royalty like Kuhwen absorbed it 50 times!

On the other hand, Ark had only absorbed the Shire 2 times so it was impossible for him to use the top levels runes of Kuhwen and the nobles. In addition, those runes required at least several months training in order to be successfully learnt.

Ark was able to acquire the Ikram and Immortal runes because they were stamped in the Shire and he had absorbed it. In other words, Ark wasn't at the standard to learn from Kuhwen or the nobles.

An information window floated in front of him after the shocking information!

-You have acquired undisclosed information about the ancient alien species called the Murat.

The universe has a long history and many alien civilizations have grown and declined.

Finding undisclosed information can help illuminate the history of the universe. Hidden alien artefacts or technology can play a decisive role.

<You have acquired information about the Shire and Rune Carving from Kuhwen> + Information about the ancient alien species Murat (4/15).

+ You have obtained 300 Adventure points for acquiring information about the Murat.

+ You have gained 5 Intelligence for acquiring information about the Murat.

‘Damn....!’

Naturally he was angry. But it wasn't like he had no income.

“However I can teach you some simple things. It isn't used by the nobles but runes that everyone knows so you should be able to use it.”

That's how he learnt a new rune.

-A new skill (Common Occupation ☆☆☆) has been learnt.

Rune Carving-Hwairam (Users, Active): This rune will cause an earthquake within 100 metres like a giant with huge feet is walking. But the earthquake is at the level of a light vibration. Kuhwen says that this rune is often used to create mischief in the palace.

<Mana consumption: 200>

-A new skill (Common Occupation ☆☆☆) has been learnt.

Rune Carving-Kuem Radon (Users, Active): Prince Kuhwen often likes to sneak out of the castle. This Kuem Radon rune is useful for that. When the Kuem rune is invoked, a third eye will be created that will enable you to see the surrounding circumstances from above. However, the weakness is that it will only last for 1 minute.

<Mana consumption: 150>

Rune Carving was registered as 3 star thanks to the rarity of each of the runes. Like Kuhwen said, the actual effects weren't that serious. They were simple skills that shook the earth and scouted the area. But Ark wasn't disappointed. It was more important to learn how to use the skill. Furthermore, it was free so Ark gladly accepted the skills.

A couple of days passed like that!

“.....”

“Hyung-nim, what are you doing?”

Ark opened his eyes as he heard Basak's voice. At the same time, a giant Ant was rushing towards him with bared fangs. Basak blocked the Ant with his shield as it prepared to attack Ark.

“Hyung-nim, are you okay?”

“Ah, I-I'm okay. You saved me.”

Ark calmed down and raised his body.

‘Pant pant! H-how surprising. I almost died. I thought I just closed my eyes for a little bit but I was actually sleeping. Damn, I used to be able to stay up three days and nights so did I grow old?’

It was reasonable.

He hadn't slept properly since entering the Valley of Darkness. In fact, it was the same even before he entered the Valley of Darkness. He only slept 4~5 hours when crossing the desert of Muratio Star thanks to its 12 hour days. And now he had stayed up all night for two days.

‘It is fortunate that we reached this spot.’

Ark regained his spirit and looked around.

Pajijik! Pepeng-! Pepeng-! Pepeng-!

The soldiers were in their formation and fighting against the Ants.

They had been constantly marching and fighting the Ants over the last two days so the soldiers were exhausted. The number had also reduced a lot and there were only 40 people remaining. But now they could fare better against the Ants.

After the first ambush, Ark started to prepare the formation in a strategically advantageous location. In addition, the soldiers repeated the battle every night so they were used to dealing with the Ants. And now they were a mere 10 kilometres remaining from the exit.

‘This is the last time. Once this battle finishes then we can leave the valley. After that we have to hurry but there is still some room. I’ve already learnt the skills so I can afford to sleep for 3~4 hours.’

He wanted to ZZZZ in a warm duvet! Just imagining it caused a happy mood.

“....Hah!” W-what am I thinking? My spirit almost flew to Andromeda again! N-no! If I die here then all the experience will fly away. Steady yourself, Ark! There is only 1 hour left until the sun rises! I have to hold on until then!”

Ark rubbed his eyes and motivated himself.

“Eh? What?”

Ark’s eyes widened.

There was a small light glittering on the ridge opposite him. It wasn’t a clear light. It flickered like a small light bulb through opaque glass but Ark had a weird feeling.

‘The light flashes periodically and it isn’t from the stars. It is an artificial light. And it is wrapped in a transparent membrane like it is meant for stealth! It feels

like when I see through Stealth using Clairvoyance. In other words, that is an object with the stealth function. It is dark yet it is just watching as we fight the Ant. Then that is probably....'

Ark considered the situation before turning around and shouting.

"Back row! Aim your plasma shots in the 3 o'clock direction!"

The soldiers turned towards the area Ark indicated and fired their plasma bullets. The plasma bullets flew towards the object but didn't hit it properly. However, two of the shots exploded and hit the target. Sparks flew and a small, round object was revealed after the explosion. Basak shouted with a surprised expression.

"Fly Ranger!"

"Set! It is Set's Fly Ranger!"

It was the first time he heard those words but Ark could tell what it was for straight away. A Fly Ranger was probably similar to a UAV. And the one monitoring the expedition with the Fly Ranger was the rebellion leader Set!

"Shoot! Shoot before that information is submitted to Set!"

Pajijijik! Pajijijik! Pajijijik!

The soldiers simultaneously fired their plasma shots. However the Fly Ranger was a considerable distance away.

It had changed directions and ran away as soon as Stealth was released. It was hit by 1 plasma bullet but the Fly Ranger only wobbled before flying out of range. The expedition was surrounded by Ants so they couldn't pursue it.

"T-This is serious!"

"We deliberately chose the Valley of Darkness to avoid Set's eyes...."

“In the end, all that effort was in vain?”

Kuhwen and Tot sighed with disappointment.

Tutung! Tutung! Tutung!

The successive sound of gun shots suddenly rang out in the darkness. Then smoke started to pour from the escaping Fly Ranger.

At that time, hundreds of people surfaced along the mountain ridge. And one of the guys jumped down towards the smoking Fly Ranger. There was the sparkle of two swords of light!

Snap! Snap! Pepeng-! Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

There was a roar as the Fly Ranger exploded. The shattered fragments of the Fly Ranger scattered as the person landed on the ground. Ark looked at the moving cloak with a sinking feeling.

“Eek? Y-you?”

This voice is?” Are you Ark?”

The man turned towards their direction. The one eyed man wearing the cloak with a blue skeleton was clearly Hawk.

Space 6: Ark x Hawk

SPACE 6. Ark x Hawk

“Look!”

“The 3rd Corps marching south have knocked out the fifth city.”

“Majimakaji resisted until the end but it was taken.”

“The 1st and 2nd Corps are currently engaging in the north and west.”

“Among the 30 major cities, 22 have currently been taken over by our revolutionary army.”

There was a stone hut with dozens of pillars. Soldiers circled in front of the pillars showing 3D images and continuously made reports.

A man was sitting down in the centre of that stone hut. Wearing a helmet in the form of a bizarre beast, the man was Set the rebel commander.

“Now there are 8 cities remaining.....”

Set stroked his jaw and muttered. The communication officers were reporting successful coups to Set.

He couldn't destroy all the Murat fleet floating in space even after occupying all the cities. But the original military power on Muratio Star was trivial. The whole planet was unified and there was the absolute space ward Abraxas so a large military presence on the planet wasn't needed.

Muratio Star only had the Zodiac Garrison that was fully equipped. Yet the Zodiac Garrison was the one that rebelled. Naturally the coup proceeded steadily as planned.

The beginning of the coup took care of Horus and the Elim at the same time. And now 22 out of 30 cities were taken. If they occupied 8 more cities then the coup would succeed. Muratio Star would then fully fall into Set's hands. If only there wasn't one variable.

“Abraxas....”

Abraxas was a double edged sword to Set. Set was able to start the coup thanks to the presence of Abraxas. But if Prince Kuhwen released Abraxas before all 30 cities were occupied then the rebellion would fail. Set and the rebel army would be turned to dust by the space fleet.

‘My mistake. I should’ve taken care of Prince Kuhwen first. I never expected that Horus would give an order for the prince to go on a pilgrimage. That means Horus must’ve noticed my plans to a certain degree.’

“Set-nim!”

A communications soldier turned his head and shouted.

“The signal of Fly Ranger no. 32 has just been cut.”

“The reason?”

“That information isn’t confirmed yet. Show the last video sent by unit no. 32.”

The communications soldier activated a symbol carved on the stone pillar. Then sand particles gathered and formed a 3D image. The video showed hundreds of Ants. And dozens of soldiers were fighting against the Ants. Set narrowed his eyes as he looked at the video before shouting.

“Prince Kuhwen!”

In the centre of the soldiers was a boy. He was the only person who could reverse the coup right now, Prince Kuhwen.

“The location is X-289, Y-3029. It is the north side of the Valley of Darkness!”

“The Holy Land around there?”

“The closest Holy Land is Tri-Force.”

“Tri-Force....is the 2nd Abraxas control unit there?”

A red light emerged from Set’s helmet.

“Who is guarding Tri-Force?”

“The 2nd unit belonging to Colonel Nemet is stationed there.”

“Tell Nemet that Kuhwen is heading there. And gather my unit immediately.”

Set turned and walked out of the stone hut while shouting.

“I am coming to Tri-Force directly!”

On the other hand.

“Dammit!”

There was a man who failed in a coup. The man who frowned while sucking on a cigarette was Lee Myung-ryong.

A few days ago a lid had opened for Lee Myung-ryong. The reason Lee Myung-ryong had thrown himself into the Lucifer Hunting was because the country was at stake. He didn’t doubt that the group was working to hunt Lucifer. This was related to a nuclear power plant explosion. Who would let their personal circumstances interrupt?

He was mistaken. There was a fierce war going on between the Prime Minister and Nation Defense office so the two teams didn’t exchange any information. Lee Myung-ryong only noticed it after reading some reports.

When he looked for it, there wasn’t just one or two incidents. Team members

divided into the NIS or the Prime Minister's office hid information and sometimes even interfered with each other.

‘I need to break that immediately!’

Lee Myung-ryong wasn't an irresponsible person to just give up. If he didn't break it now then the behaviour would just increase. Thus Lee Myung-ryong stayed up several days and nights collecting the related materials. Then he reported the performance of the two teams at a Lucifer Hunting meeting.

“Please tell me clearly!”

The answer to Lee Myung-ryong's effort.....

I don't know what you're talking about. Why are you questioning us about this?”

“Are you saying that we're doing this deliberately? We didn't know about this. It is a problem if there isn't any unity between team members but shouldn't you solve the problem? Isn't that your position as advisor?”

“Or? Is there any evidence that we gave orders for such a thing?”

“If you have it then bring it out. We want to see it.”

A national emergency was being interrupted by a quarrel but now he was being put in a corner. Something broke in Lee Myung-ryong's mind after hearing those words.

He wanted to jump onto the table and kick the jaw of the Prime Minister's Office Director and Department of Defense Director until they got a fracture that required spending 8 weeks recovering. After that, he would beat them in the face until they would become unrecognizable for 12 weeks.

.....That was inside Lee Myung-ryong's brain.

But Lee Myung-ryong had no choice but to endure it. It was because the

various problems would probably get even worse. No, to be honest he wouldn't have hesitated but he had a talk with Kang Ho-cheol before he entered the conference room.

"Hyung-nim, I know what Hyung-nim is thinking but please be patient. The guys in the meeting room are the ones who hired Hyung-nim. And those cheap bastards won't agree with you. Then what next? Right now Hyung-nim is the only one that can lead the Lucifer Hunting team. What is they change Hyung-nim? And I belong to the NIS but I also have no choice but to listen to the Prime Minister's office. The Lucifer Hunting team will become worse if you leave. So please look for other ways. This is a request."

'Other methods....'

Something else appeared in Lee Myung-ryong's head. There was still hope. Hyun-woo was his beloved student who was also familiar with the game. Lee Myung-ryong wanted to ask him about Lucifer.

However! However! However!

-The customer can't receive your call right now so please call back after a while.

He heard that message every time he called.

"Dammit! My temper! It can't be like this. I should go and visit him directly. If Hyun-woo didn't lose his phone then he will die by my hands."

Lee Myung-ryong put out his cigarette and got up.

"H-Hyung-nim?"

"It really is Hyung-nim!"

A bunch of guys flocked to Ark.

Kurakan, Ellain, Hegel, Milan, Berad, Kalliben, Cupa, Hedro and the other employees of Dark Eden ran towards him with tears streaming down their faces. Following behind them was Kaya, Park and Sadain. Slayer, Leon, Melina and Rapid also caught his eye.

They suddenly appeared out of nowhere.

“Stop! Who are you?”

Someone interrupted just before there was an emotional reunion between Ark and his team members. A giant with black skin stood in front of them.

“Hyung-nim isn’t a person that everyone can meet. Hyung-nim is the leader of the expedition that guards Prince Kuhwen and the Elim’s successor. If you want to meet him then you have to clarify your status and request to me first.”

“What? This black body?”

“Why is he acting this smug in front of Hyung-nim?”

Berad and Cupa who boasted the best body in Dark Eden approached with unpleasant expressions. Then the huge figure held up his shield and replied.

“I am the guardian Basak! Ark hyung-nim’s most faithful subordinate!”

“You can’t just say that.”

One man pushed between Berad and Cupa while speaking. The man wrapped in a cloak was Ellain.

“I didn’t have any interest in this matter but I am Ellain, Ark-nim’s most loyal subordinate. No one can match my loyalty to Ark-nim.”

“What?”

Basak shook angrily.

“I’ve been with Hyung-nim for 10 years and I never saw someone like you!”

“10 years? This bastard.....”

Ellain shook his head and shouted.

“I don’t know how you can claim to be with Hyung-nim for 10 years but even if that is true, I am his most loyal subordinate. Loyalty can’t be proven just because of the amount of time. I believe that Ark-nim is God’s Messenger. No other person can top me as his most loyal minion.”

“I am! I am his most loyal subordinate! I am his most loyal subordinate!”

“T-this bastard! What are you saying?”

“You don’t apply! Why are you interfering?”

“Don’t you just have a large body? So I’ll tell you this! The position of Ark’s most loyal subordinate is for Ellain! Wouldn’t you get mad if someone is trying to take your place?”

“You’re the one trying to take my place!”

“Say that again you bastard!”

A loyalty competition between Basak and Ellain started out of nowhere.

“I can’t talk to this guy. Hyung-nim, please say something to him!”

“I also want that. Hyung-nim, please say something to him!”

The two of them couldn’t decide in the end and shouted at Ark. But Ark had no intention of getting between Basak and Ellain. While the two of them were arguing, the remaining employees of Dark Eden circled Ark.

“Ohuk! Hyung-nim, we thought Hyung-nim was dead!”

Hegel held onto Ark and spoke while sobbing. It was also true for the other employees. They weren’t hugging him like Hegel but their expressions were thrilled. However not everyone was glad about the reunion.

“I told you. He isn’t someone who will die that easily.”

The testy voice belonged to Rapid. Rapid stared at Ark for a while before sighing.

“If you died so easily then I wouldn’t have gone to so much trouble previously.”

“Why does it sound like you dissatisfied with the fact that I’m alive?”

“No but I’m not so pleased that tears will spill.”

“Is that something you should say after not speaking for several days? No, are you the CEO? You are my employee and subordinate. Shouldn’t you be aware of your position?”

“I’m aware enough. I joined your company in order to meet Lucifer. So you shouldn’t worry about a bullet in the back of your head.”

“Ha! Now you’re making outright threats?”

“You don’t have to worry about that now.”

“That is really a comfort.”

“But don’t be completely relieved. I’m not the only person aiming at you.”

“I know that too.”

Ark shook his head and looked away. Ark’s gaze turned towards the man having a conversation with Kuhwen.

The order was slightly inverted by Hegel’s appearance but let’s return to when Ark saw the Fly Ranger on the edge of the Valley of Darkness. The person who suddenly destroyed the Fly Ranger was now carrying on a dialogue with Kuhwen.

The problem was that this person knew Ark. The man that Ark knew.....

‘.....Hawk!’

His name was Hawk! Hawk the leader of the investigation team.

It was thanks to Hawk that Ark could meet the team again. No, it was too early to say but it was thanks to Hawk’s favour that the team members could even accompany Hawk. His team members weren’t the only ones accompanying Ark. Along with Hawk’s subordinates and Ferguson’s mercenaries, he was accompanied by 1,000 Murat soldiers. He didn’t know how Hawk managed to lead 1,000 Murat soldiers but it made Ark nervous.

‘If the person is Hawk then there is no guarantee that they are friendly!’

But fortunately Hawk wasn’t the opposition. No, after the first meeting Hawk didn’t even glance at Ark and just started talking with Kuhwen.

“Let’s explain the situation after leaving the Valley of Darkness.”

Hawk helped the expedition with the Ants and they escaped from the Valley of Darkness. And he met with Kuhwen after going several kilometres and setting up camp. That’s how Ark could meet up with his team members now. Ark looked at Hawk for a while before asking Rapid “What’s going on?”

“That’s what I want to ask.”

Rapid looked Ark up and down and started to talk.

“We were in the middle of a desert once we regained our spirits. The spaceships couldn’t be seen and all our equipment had disappeared. But we were all gathered together. Hawk and Ferguson’s entourage was close as well. You, Tori, Ferguson, A and B were the only ones missing.”

“All of you were in the same place?”

Ark asked Rapid with a frown. Ark entered this world at the training centre by himself. He had possessed a NPC called Jed who had the same occupation as

him so that was an explanation but Tori, Ferguson, A and B were also separated. Therefore Ark thought everyone else had been scattered. Yet the rest fell in the same place.....

'I don't know the laws of this place. Tori, Ferguson, A and B all have a beast animal species in common. Did the beasts fall into one place while the humanoid species fall in another?'

But such a thing wasn't important now. Either way he managed to meet up with the team again. The problem was that this wasn't a one team reunion. Ferguson's mercenaries don't matter but it is Hawk's team that is difficult to convince. Of course, they were members of the investigation team so they couldn't be called enemies. But that situation changed after entering the black hole.

Ark was drawn into the black hole because of Hawk and Hawk was drawn in because of Ark. And Ferguson was the main culprit in both sides being sucked in the black hole. How did these people act when together?

"There was a problem at first."

Ark made a '?' and Rapid nodded before explaining.

"A battle started after we noticed each other. It really was a terrible scene when thinking back. Didn't I tell you? We lost all our equipment when first entering this world. Dozens of almost naked people committing violence against each other....."

It would indeed be embarrassing behaviour. At least Hawk was able to maintain his decency. Unlike the other members, Hawk had managed to retain his cloak and a few equipment. It meant that Hawk's equipment were ancient artefacts in present time. Anyway!

The person who arbitrated at that time was Rapid and Hawk.

“It was incomprehensible. First things were put in order. Then it was necessary to secure our safety. Hawk had the same idea so the war was put in order. And while we were consulting about the situation, they appeared.”

“They.....”

“The soldiers we are came who are the volunteer army.”

Rapid indicated towards the 1,000 people gathered in the camp.

As soon as Hawk and I talked to them, we understood that this was a different time zone and planet. We concluded that this unexpected event occurred due to the effects of the black hole. And we knew we should come here. At that time we met one of the lords called Rasius. But rebels under the command of Set just attack his territory and he barely escaped. He was rallying a volunteer army when he received notification that Prince Kuhwen still lived and was moving to oppose Set.”

It wasn’t an exact fact. Rapid said they ‘met and spoke’ but they were actually captured by the volunteer army. Muratio Star hadn’t seen the various alien species so they were suspicious. But Rasius didn’t see any of Set’s subordinates and released Rapid and Hawk’s groups.

However they suddenly fell into a different world so they had nowhere to go. Furthermore, Rapid and Hawk were users strong in the specialized gaming field. It was a sudden situation but they grasped the atmosphere immediately.

Rasius was the first NPC they met in this world. Rapid and Hawk intuitively sensed that accompanying Rasius was the way to escape this world.

“It was the right answer.”

-<For the Benefit of Muratio Star!>

You came through a black hole and met a militia in another time and space.

Currently Set has incited a rebellion against Horus and Muratio Star is in chaos. Fortunately, the Prince was heading to the Holy Land on a pilgrimage and managed to avoid Set's assassins along with the retinue that accompanied him. On the other hand, Lord Rasius has escaped from a city under fire by Set and organized a volunteer army to meet up with Prince Kuhwen in the Valley of Darkness. If you help the volunteer army stop Set's rebellion then you can figure out how to return to your original universe.

Difficulty: –

The quest was given to the party members at the same time. Ark also received a quest with the name <For the Benefit of Muratio Star!> but the contents were different. Ark had to help Kuhwen directly achieve the objective while Rapid and the others needed to help the volunteer army.

Rapid had an easy journey while Ark had suffered. They had to battle against Set's armies while moving to meet with Kuhwen. Hawk and Rapid were soldiers that showed exceptional skills in combat. In particular, Hawk and his subordinates had rescued many of the soldiers from a crisis.

Rapid explained up to here with a serious expression.

“When I heard the Seven Swords title for the first time, I thought it was nothing but my mind changed after seeing it directly. Hawk is on a different dimension from ordinary users. His combat skills, ability to lead and strong faith.”

“Faith? What?

“I don’t know either. It is just my feeling.”

“Sheesh, this guy is one of the Seven Swords. And there is no such thing. Faith about money, faith about money, faith about money.....”

Rapid ignored Ark’s words and continued. Anyway, Hawk’s status quickly increased thanks to his achievements. Then just before arriving at the Valley of Darkness, the volunteer army leader died from an enemy sniper. Just before dying, Rasius requested that Hawk take over control of the militia. That was why Hawk commanded the militia in the Valley of Darkness.

‘For the militia leader to fall in a matter of days.....’

He didn’t know what faith Hawk had but he managed to gain an advantage even after being dropped in a desert.

“You know what happened after that. We arrived at the scheduled destination a few days ago. But time passed and Prince Kuhwen didn’t arrive so we entered the Valley of Darkness.”

They found a Fly Ranger and made an attack. Incidentally, the first attack that hit the Fly Ranger was from Kalliben’s sniping. Rapid had been describing the process to Ark with a serious look.

“This matter is unrelated to me. But Hawk is different from ordinary users. And we already have Lucifer to go against. It isn’t a wise choice to have Hawk as an enemy in such a situation. Isn’t now a good time for a reconciliation?”

“This isn’t something you should be saying to me.”

Ark replied in a curt voice.

“Didn’t you see it yourself? You did. Did I do something bad to that guy first? No? Then it must be a one-sided bullying.”

“It seems like that but.....”

“But what?”

“The difference is the opponent.”

“The difference? What does that mean?”

“I’m not going to tell you anything. And is Hawk childish? Would he harass without a reason? Shouldn’t there be an appropriate reason? Think about it. What did you do?”

“If Hawk has a reason then I don’t know it either. Why do you think I did something bad?”

“Because it is you.”

“Dammit! Am I the ringleader of evil? If I am then will everything be okay?”

Ark declared sharply with an angry expression.

“Ark-nim, His Majesty is calling.”

A guard from next to Kuhwen said. Ark scowled at Rapid and approached Kuhwen.

“Ark, welcome. This person called Hawk told me almost all of the circumstances. You are people who have passed through time and space. Ark, are Hawk’s words true?”

Ark looked at Hawk with annoyed eyes after Kuhwen’s words. However there was no point now that the facts became clear. And once Ark returned to his

original world, the real Jed would tell Tot and Basak that it was a lie.

“I never intended to trick you.”

“I think that it was inevitable in that situation. But it is an amazing thing. I honestly don’t believe they travelled through time and space but you are different. Moreover Ark is in Jed’s body who I know for a long time. I feel a strong bond between us. Hawk asked me about the way to return to the original world. Ark, do you have the same idea?”

“Yes.”

“To be honest, I can’t give you a definite answer. Time and space travel is still beyond the Murat. However I will make a promise. If you quell Set’s rebellion then I will find a way to return you to your original world.”

In the end he needed to complete the quest. Kuhwen alternated looking between Ark and Hawk.

“Rasius who was the militia leader was killed in battle and Hawk took over command. I am sad that I lost a great lord and loyal servant but there is no time for grief. We must turn off Abraxas quickly in order to prevent a greater tragedy. And now I have reliable people in both you and Hawk. I will leave the militia and expedition to you and hope that you both join forces to overcome these challenges.”

“Understood.”

Ark bowed and replied. He then withdrew to the side with Hawk and spoke.

“I’m grateful for the safe return of my employees.”

“You don’t have to say anything. I just judged that it would be favourable to me at the time. But I regretted it after you spoke. I should’ve handled them when there was a chance.”

Ark was about to snap angrily but closed his mouth.

In fact, Ark had never thought seriously about Hawk. Hawk was hostile to Ark first so Ark regarded him as an opponent. Yet he thought it was strange after Rapid's words. Why was Hawk acting like this? He hadn't thought deeply about it until Rapid made him think.

"I'm just wondering, have I ever done anything to you?"

"You have."

"Eh? I have? Me? What?"

"I don't want to talk about it. You won't understand even if I tell you."

"Damn! Isn't it unfair if you don't tell me? Wouldn't you be annoyed if a person said you made a mistake but wouldn't tell you what it was?"

"It isn't something that can be fixed. I can't forgive what you did. It won't be significant if you apologize to me."

"Who is going to apologize?"

In fact, he had been quietly thinking about that. Rapid was right. Ark's ultimate enemy was Lucifer. In such a situation, he couldn't afford to have Hawk who wasn't an ordinary user as an enemy. And luckily he hadn't received any great damage from the Hawk situation yet.

He thought now was the perfect time to reconcile. But he thought it was good he didn't say anything after seeing Hawk's attitude. How could he reconcile with such an impolite person? And something like that didn't fit Ark's personality.

He didn't avoid fights. If he avoided fights then he would just be stomped on by this world. He had to be merciless to someone who challenged him in battle so they would think twice about challenging him. If he didn't then a situation

like the 3 monkey brothers would occur. This was the gaming attitude that Ark maintained from his time in New World. However.....

“Now isn’t the time. Isn’t that right?”

“Unfortunately so.”

Hawk nodded. Hawk had no intention of reconciling with Ark. Ark was the same as well. But now they had travelled to another time and space so the situation was unknown. If the two of them fought over every aspect then it might result in a total loss. So it was necessary to resolve the problem in front of them. It was like when the investigation team’s mission proceeded despite both opposing each other.

“If we win then we can get a clue to return to our original world. If the quest fails then we lose our items and spaceship.”

“It isn’t equipment and items.”

“What?”

“I killed one of my subordinates once I found that this was a different time and space. Not long ago, he contacted me over phone that he revived in Turan. His equipment and items were returned.”

Ark had also considered such a method. And there were the right people. 3 Monkey Brothers. But Ark couldn’t do it even if they stole money from him. Because the death penalty in Galaxian wasn’t as easy as it used to be at this level. That’s why he thought they were better used as shields for Kuhwen!

‘He sacrificed one of his subordinates just to verify such information?’

This guy really shed no blood or tears.

“But he couldn’t catch the signal of the Death Knight in the original world. The ship fell into the black hole. However, if we’re alive then the ship might just be

trapped somewhere. Then I can only come to this conclusion. If I escape this world in the normal method then I might regain my ship. That's why I can't die."

Ark was also the same. He already spent a couple of days in this world and gained 4 levels and learnt 3 skills. Hawk also piled up quite a bit of experience leading the militia. They needed to find a way to get out alive. And currently the only clue was the <For the Benefit of Muratio Star!> quest. Help Kuhwen prevent Set's rebellion.

They needed to complete the quest even if it meant holding hands with the enemy. Ark and Hawk agreed on that part.

"The Fly Ranger was destroyed but it likely already sent the information about Kuhwen to Set. Naturally the defense at the Holy Land called Tri-Force will be strengthened. So there is no time to delay in this place. If we give them more time to call enemy troops then it will be disadvantageous to us. We need to attack before their troops are ready."

"I also meant to say that."

Ark smiled and stretched out his hand.

"I take it this means a truce is established for the moment?"

".....Temporarily."

Hawk glanced at Ark's hand before turning away.

"Harley, sort out everything! We will depart straight away! The goal is Tri-Force!"

This was an unlucky guy. However, he was a reliable user if they were on the same side.

"Temporarily....but....."

Space 7: The Murat Saga (Part: 1)

SPACE 7. The MURAT SAGA (PART : 1)

“Are we late?”

The words emerged from Hawk’s mouth. A 3D image made from sand was floating in front of him.

The first thing that came into sight was a large pyramid towering in the middle of the desert. The pyramid was the Holy Land Tri-Force where the device to operate Abraxas was asleep.

But the pyramid wasn’t the only thing in the picture. Thousands of soldiers were surrounding the pyramid. There were also dozens of armoured vehicles that looked like tanks containing weapons.

“Doesn’t it seem like there are at least 5,000? There are dozens of Sphinx-Murat tank-so far. It is a scale I’ve never seen before. The number of troops to capture a city also wasn’t of this scale. This isn’t the number of troops that should be stationed at a Holy Land. It is still increasing.”

This was the reason why Hawk asked if it was too late.

Set knew that one of the sanctuaries contained the control device for Abraxas. However he didn’t know the exact location so he stationed troops at all the Holy Lands on Muratio Star. The fact that they were bringing in reinforcements meant that he identified the location. The Fly Ranger probably transmitted information about the expedition in the Valley of Darkness before it exploded.

Of course, Ark and Hawk had expected this. They ran quickly but the troops

had already received reinforcements.

“The rebel numbers stationed at Tri-Force outnumber us by 4 times. Furthermore, they are expecting us to come so the odds aren’t in our favour?”

“It would be stupid to fight when the odds aren’t in our favour.”

“Fortunately we were able to contact Rasius and two other lords before leaving Minaheim. Perhaps they’ve advanced to a close place. Shouldn’t we wait here until they manage to join us?”

“That would be great! I would prefer to do this!”

The nobles spoke unanimously. Hawk frowned and was about to open his mouth.

“If we continue to delay then it is suicide. The Abraxas control unit is Set’s only weakness. Not that Set has discovered that the control device is at Tri-Force, he will use everything he has to defend it. The militia is coming here but Set’s forces would also concentrate here. They will be dozens of times the size of the militia. It will just be disadvantageous to delay the time....isn’t that right?”

Ark looked at Hawk and smiled.

“....That’s right.”

Hawk gave him a sharp sidelong glance before nodding with an uncomfortable expression.

“But aren’t the odds not in our favour right now?”

“I never said the odds weren’t in our favour.”

“Then the odds are in our favour?”

“No, the odds definitely aren’t in our favour. That is definite.”

“What? Are you joking right now? Who do you think we are? We are the Murat nobility. I don’t know where you humans came from but you should be aware of your position. Rudeness won’t be forgiven even if you are the militia leader.”

“I have no intention of being rude.....”

Hawk sighed and muttered.

‘Huhuhu, that Hawk bastard. He’s in trouble. Please be in trouble.’

Ark inwardly smiled while watching Hawk. In fact, Ark had already expected that the nobles would act like this to some extent.

Kurai and the nobles’ lives were the most precious thing to them. They wanted to help Prince Kuhwen stop the uprising but they have no intention of risking their lives. They would even become Set’s subordinates if it meant surviving. Therefore this reaction from the nobles was expected.

However Ark didn’t say anything to Hawk. He wanted to see Hawk in a difficult situation from the same stiff attitude that Ark had faced. Of course the nobles wouldn’t accept it. After Hawk was in trouble for a sufficient amount of time, he would use the 3 monkey brothers to persuade them. Ark would come forward and solve Hawk’s difficult problem. Of course the eyes would have no choice but to change from Hawk to Ark.

Then Hawk turned and looked at Harley. Harley pointed his pistol without hesitation to his temple and pulled the trigger?

Tang!

The nobles shut their mouth with shock after hearing the gunshot. While Harley was bleeding from the temple, Hawk raised his hands and said.

“That’s enough.”

“W-what are you doing?”

“You nobles seem to have misunderstood so I am showing you our resolution. I am a Murat. I don’t know why you are calling me a human. But my resolution is different from yours. If it isn’t possible to stop Set’s rebellion then I will die. This is my resolution. Isn’t there any need to waste more time with words when time is against us? So please be polite. Come here.”

.....The nobles approached.

‘This bastard, what is his identity?’

Ark looked at Hawk with amazement.

It took Ark one day to determine the nobles’ inclination and to find a method for obedience. However Hawk did it in only a few minutes. No, if he looked at the results then the actual situation between Hawk and Ark was different. Ark threatened them by staging a scene of bloody assault but Hawk didn’t use any threats.

-If you interrupt my work then I’ll kill you. I don’t want any troubles.

Hawk’s eyes were clearly conveying that message. Normally people would placate the NPC but Hawk just disturbed them without any mercy. When he thought back to the beginning, Hawk also did that to the investigation team. He turned each faction against each other for his own purpose.

‘Now once again....’

He really was frightening. At this moment, other people were thinking the same thing.

“What, what the? That guy? He is no better than Ark.”

A pale Ferguson muttered as he looked at Hawk. In fact, Ferguson’s heart had jumped at the appearance of Hawk.

‘I am being dragged by Ark just like in New World. No, it is worse. Ark won’t let us get away with taking money from him in New World. He will make various excuses to use me until only my bones remain. But that doesn’t mean it is impossible.’

Ferguson immediately thought of Hawk.

‘I don’t know why but there isn’t a good relationship between Ark and Hawk. And Hawk is the head of the investigation team and one of the Seven Swords. If I’m glued to Hawk then Ark won’t be able to touch me. Yes, that’s it. The only way for us to live is Hawk. I would rather shed bloods and tears under someone else instead of Ark. Okay. I should flatter Hawk immediately until so that I can stick with Hawk when returning to our original world!’

He held such ulterior motives. However he changed his mind when he saw the blood dripping from Harley’s temple. When the nobles were bothering Hawk, he had given a command for his subordinate to commit suicide. Hawk showed a cruelty even more outrageous than Ark.

Ferguson thought about it. The old authority was the better authority. At least Ark wouldn’t order people to suicide with a gun like Hawk.

‘It’s over. Once again our game has ended here.’

And he felt despair. Of course these were only the concerns of monkeys. Hawk started talking once he dealt a blow to the nobles.

“There odds aren’t in our favour if it is a fight. But our goal isn’t to fight. It is different from exterminating the enemies. Our purpose is to release Abraxas. Kuhwen needs to reach the control device.”

“Isn’t that the same thing?”

Kurai frowned and said. But when Hawk turned around, he evaded his eyes

and coughed. That was Hawk's intimidating effect.

“No, I....”

“If the purpose is different then our method also changes.”

The person who interrupted Kurai's words was Ark. When the scout told the situation at Tri-Force to Ark, he had already planned a strategy to apply to present circumstances. The reason he didn't speak was because he wanted to see Hawk's reaction. But Hawk's expression indicated that he was thinking similarly to Ark.

“That's right.”

Hawk answered with a shallow smile.

“Are you ready?”

“Of course.”

Ark laughed as he took out his lightsaber. Then Hawk also pulled out his pair of swords.

“Now there is no reason to hide it so I will speak. I will go forward with you. Our purpose is the same so I will cooperate but this is still Galaxian. You and I are joining forces to fight together but this is probably the first and last time.”

“I agree.”

“Then don't say anything more.”

Hawk grabbed the reins of a camel and raised his sword. At the same time, a wide expanse of soldiers appeared along the desert ridge. Needless to say, these were the soldiers brought by Hawk and Ark.

The strategy meeting only took 10 minutes. Now that Set knew the Abraxas

control device was at Tri-Force, there was no reason to delay the time. Both Ark and Hawk thought the same thing.

Things proceeded rapidly once a specific operation was decided. They crossed the desert and arrived in front of Tri-Force where the rebel army were stationed. It was the battle to decide the fate of Muratio Star!

Hawk looked down at the distant Tri-Force and shouted.

“Everybody, charge!”

“Waaaaahhhh!”

The soldiers burst out shouting and the assault began. The rebel army in formation around Tri-Force didn’t panic at the charge of the militia. 1,000 soldiers crossed the desert without concealing themselves. Naturally the rebel army had been waiting for the militia. The rebel army camp charged at the same time.

Pepepepeng! Pepepepeng!

The Murat’s tank called the Sphinx started attacking. The flying shells covered the sky! However, Ark and the employees of Dark Eden already experienced such a thing on Beltana. Ark gave Hegel an order.

“Hyung-nim, over there!”

Hegel’s trajectory prediction skill that he used after a long time!

“That shell will do direct damage to us!”

Hegel designated some shells and the gunners of Ark’s team, Leon and Kalliben lifted their rifles. There was the continuous sound of gunfire and several shells exploded in mid-air.

The scene of a few shells exploded above Hawk’s team caught his eye. There seemed to be a soldier with the same skill as Hegel in Hawk’s team. But it was

impossible for Hawk and Ark's team to intercept all the shells. Dozens of shells hit the militia's camp.

Kwa kwa kwa kwang! Kwa kwa kwa kwang! Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

The desert shook and pillars of sand shot up all over the place. However the damage seen wasn't that big. They had expected a bombardment and deployed a wide formation beforehand. In addition, Hawk hadn't ordered a blind charge.

“Rune Carving, Crest of Protection Om!”

“Rune Carving, Crest of Grace Phantom Veil!”

“Rune Carving, Crest of Iron Wall Kubenatian!”

-Rune Carving: Om has been used.

<The defense of all allies within 100 metres will increase by 50% for 1 hour>

-Rune Carving: Phantom Veil has been used.

<The evasion ability of all allies within 100 metres will increase by 50% for 1 hour>

-Rune Carving: Kubenatian has been used.

<All splash damage to allies within 100 metres will

be invalidated for 1 hour>.....

The Rune Carving used by the nobles! The nobles were of great use on the battlefield. There was also the recovery of Kuhwen's 'Ankh' rune. Fortunately they penetrated through the bombardment and reached the hostile area.

"Now! Everybody, fire the plasma bullets!"

Hundreds of plasma bullets instantly plunged into the hostile area. There were sparks as the plasma bullets hit and the enemy was engulfed in heat, instantly disappearing. Of course the enemy didn't receive the attack politely.

They returned fire!

Pajijijik! Pajijijik!

Sparks occurred on all sides as the soldiers melted. Hawk was no exception. Hawk led the soldiers so he was the focus of the plasma shots. But Hawk was one of the Seven Swords so he wasn't hit by such shots. Ark thought it was possible for Hawk to avoid.....

Hawk revolved in the sand and two plasma bullets passed by close to him. Thus far it was like Ark expected.

However his next movement was impossible to expect. Hawk crossed his two swords and the shots were blocked like spider webs hung there. Then the pair of swords uncrossed and the bullets returned to the enemy?

'What? This ridiculous defense technique?'

A skill to block or avoid long distance attacks was indispensable to a warrior. Ark also had a skill called Sword Defense. But due to its nature, Sword Defense could only be used with a lightsaber and it was basically an evasion technique.

He had studied the skill through continuous study yet the probability of

success was still only approximately 50%. He could also only return fire to the enemy 1 in every 3 shots. But Hawk had reflected 1 shot simultaneously while avoiding 2 plasma bullets. He had to admit that Hawk's ability to defend against long range attacks was one step above him.

However the scene afterwards was even more amazing.

Pepepepeng! Pepepepeng!

The tank units lined up behind the rebel troops. The Sphinx was a Murat tank in the form of a lion with the head of a human. The form was a Sphinx but it didn't speak in riddles like the stories.

Shells came pouring out of the gaping mouth! Every time the Sphinxes emitted flames, pillars of sand would fly up and dozens would die in the militia. Then Hawk rolled between sand pillars and exclaimed.

"Harley, is it ready yet?"

"In a moment! I'm not familiar with the Murat's machines....but....done!"

Harley replied while manipulating a small machine. One of the Sphinxes turned its head and started to fire at its own side.

"Ack! Are you crazy? Where are you shooting?"

"We're not operating it! The equipment suddenly jammed and is moving by itself!"

"By itself? Dammit, the controls have been hijacked! Cut off all connections including communications!"

"It is already too late! The Sphinx control system isn't connected!"

"Then cut off the power supply. It doesn't matter as long as the bombardment is stopped!"

The enemy unit fell into panic.

“Damn. As a controller, seeing the controls being hijacked is really creepy.”

Park shuddered and muttered while controlling Car and Kum. But what happened next astounded Ark.

“Now! Minsk, Brian, go!”

The two teams that Hawk nominated flew towards the Sphinx still bombarding the militia. They grabbed the armour and climbed up to the turrets!

“For Captain Hawk-nim!”

Kwa kwa kwa kwang! Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

The Sphinx was wrapped in light and exploded.

‘Oh my god! Self-destruct? Did the NPC subordinate just use Self-destruct?’

Ark’s mouth dropped open as he stared at the flaming Sphinx. There were human NPCs in this world. Even pioneers who could resurrect wouldn’t easily accept death.

Yet their loyalty was high enough that Hawk’s subordinates would Self-destruct when commanded. And Hawk’s men even said nonsense like ‘For Captain Hawk-nim’ before dying. This meant that his subordinates’ loyalty transcended imagination! Ark shuddered at the thought of such loyalty.

‘Hawk can inspire faith in users.....’

Ark could feel such a thing. It was a faith in his purpose. That was the faith Ark felt from Hawk. And he was able to identify this on the battlefield. Hawk’s ability was strong but the onerous thing was his subordinates’ attitudes.

Previously Harley had even fired a gun towards his head because of Hawk.

This degree of command over his subordinates meant that Hawk wasn't an ordinary user.

The problem was a user like that was obstructing Ark. Not long ago, Hawk had declared that he couldn't get along on Ark. They were grasping hands at the moment but would become enemies again once returned to their original world. A guy with subordinates like that would become his enemy. A sigh naturally emerged when he thought about the future.

Furthermore, Hawk wasn't Ark's only opponent.

'But I'm not someone who will soften under something like that. What? I wouldn't understand even if he told me the reason? I don't want to understand! And I don't like you either. You're mistaken if you think I will tremble under something like this. What is this? I am Ark. I'll start taking direct action now!'

.....This was Ark's resolution. Ark wanted to show off his skill and indicate that he wasn't inferior to Hawk.

"Units 2 and 3, switch to a defense posture and slow the charging speed. Unit 1 will maintain your rush!"

The militia slowed and formed a formation in the shape of a Δ that was focused around Hawk. In other words, it was converted into a wedge formation. After Hawk and his subordinates took the lead and concentrated their firepower, the rebel army started to be pushed back.

But that was only the camp at the front. The power of the left and right wings started weakening under the rebel army. The size of the rebel army was 5 times the militia so it was natural. Nevertheless, the reason the militia's formation didn't collapse was due to Ark.

—Like I said, our objective isn't to annihilate the rebels. Even if all the troops

are killed, it will be our victory if Kuhwen operates the Abraxas control device. Therefore we only have one strategy. Once the battle commences, everyone will use all of their power to penetrate through towards Tri-Force. But Kuhwen's defense at the back will weaken if we concentrate our breakthrough power in the front. So your mission is to protect Prince Kuhwen in the back. If Kuhwen dies then it will mean nothing if we break through the enemy.

Those were Hawk's words.

'It is Hawk's instructions but....'

"Defense Break! Khafra Fencing 3rd style! Galaxy Sword!"

Ark wielded his lightsaber and pushed back the enemy. Dozens of swords spread out in a vortex and hit enemy lines.

Kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa!

'Concentrate on the quest! Don't worry about Hawk!'

Ark wielded his lightsaber in a trance. Sword Defense struck the flying plasma bullets as he plunged into enemy lines. A bright trajectory of light dealt with 10 enemies. In the midst of all that, he didn't forget about Kuhwen who was the key NPC.

"Ferguson, A, and B, protect him! If something happens to His Highness...do you understand?"

"I-I'm aware of that!"

"Stop! Stop! Throw your body on the battlefield!"

The 3 monkey brothers ran around and blocked every shot heading towards Kuhwen with their bodies. Meanwhile Ark quickly and accurately attacked the enemies aiming for Kuhwen!

"Slayer, concentrate on protecting Prince Kuhwen along with Ferguson, A and

B. Expand a circle around Kuhwen to receive the enemy attacks. Don't forget. The purpose of this battle is to escort Kuhwen safely to Tri-Force."

"I know! DNA transformation!"

"Lightning Spear!"

"Bring it on! Wahhhh!"

Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu!

Ark's team formed a circle around Kuhwen and relentlessly knocked back waves of attacks. Prominent among them was Basak and Ellain.

.....Of course, there was a reason for it.

"I'm more loyal to Hyung-nim!"

"Don't make me laugh! That is the purpose for my existence!"

Basak and Ellain had competed against each other as soon as they met for the title of Ark's most loyal subordinate. Their argument didn't end even when the battle started. In the end, they agreed that the person who was more useful in the battle would become the most loyal subordinate.

Thanks to that.....

"Iron Wall! Burning Shield!"

Basak stopped the attacks heading towards Ark with his shield. And 'heh, how about that? Isn't it good? Now will you admit it?' popped onto his face as he looked at Ellain wielding a sword. And Ellain destroyed a few enemies in front of Basak while his expression said 'Heh, I was waiting for you to finish.'

This loyalty competition between Basak and Ellain resulted in a great synergy effect. Thanks to that, the pile of bodies around them was so high that it looked like a wall! But when looking at a similar scene, Hawk's reaction was different

from Hawk.

“Yes, there needs to be this much if you want to be my opponent.”

Hawk smiled as he looked at Hawk while raging behind enemy lines. But the military situation started becoming difficult over time despite Ark and Hawk's efforts.

Apart from Hawk's team in the lead and Ark's team gathered around Kuhwen, the rest of the militia started to collapse under the onslaught from the rebel army. The enemy forces breaking through the formation made it difficult for Hawk to maintain his rush.

This was the inevitable result. The difference between the rebel army and militia was 5 times. 1 to 5 or 10 to 50 wasn't a large difference to excellent users like Ark and Hawk. However it was different when talking about the thousands.

“Hawk-nim, any more is impossible!”

“40% of the militia has been killed!”

“If we delay any longer then we won't be able to retreat and will be wiped out!”

“As expected, is it impossible to break through the defense?”

Hawk bit his lip and muttered as he heard the incoming reports. So far Hawk had never retreated against an enemy. But it would be stupid to insist on advancing when it was impossible. A superior commander needed to know when to retreat. And Hawk knew that time was now.

“.....Retreat.”

A sigh emerged from Hawk's mouth.

“From now on, all troops switch to defense.”

Thus the first and last battle Ark and Hawk would fight together ended in failure.

“Kuhahahaha! Those ridiculous bastards.”

Deep within the rebel camp stationed in front of Tri-Force. A middle aged bearded man laughed as he looked at the militia running away. He was Nemet who was in charge of the troops stationed at Tri-Force.

“They intended to penetrate us for Prince Kuhwen but it is impossible with their numbers. Indeed, it is natural. Set has already occupied 25 of the major cities. And the remaining 5 will soon enter our hands. So the space fleet won’t dare go against Lord Set even if Abraxas is turned off! Then....”

Nemet’s eyes narrowed like a hawk.

“I will rise even higher.”

Nemet was dissatisfied with his status. A person who assisted in a rebellion always hoped for a gain like that.

Nemet and others participated in the rebellion because that profit was guaranteed. But once the rebellion started, he was placed in charge of the 2nd Corps and stationed at a Holy Land. Set explained that it was an important duty to stop the release of Abraxas but there was no guarantee that Kuhwen would come.

He might be caught by other troops or the Abraxas control device was at another Holy Land. If he did nothing then his compensation would be minimal compared to the rebel leaders that captured the major cities. He had become really depressed until Kuhwen’s army appeared.

‘My mission is to defend Tri-Force. The militia is defeated here so my mission

is accomplished. But there are only 1,000 of them. It is impossible for such a militia to penetrate through 5,000 troops. This is enough for me to be proud. But it will be different if the militia is wiped out and the Prince captured alive.'

He had no room to think about it during the fight. But the power of the militia wasn't enough to cause Nemet worry.

The rebels had only suffered 10% damage during the fighting. On the other hand, the militia had lost 40% of their troops. In such a situation, he couldn't just watch the enemy running away.

Nemet was about to give the order to chase when he flinched.

'Wait? Isn't something strange?'

Nemet's intuition stopped him.

Kuhwen coming here meant that the Abraxas control device was hidden somewhere in Tri-Force. The only way for Prince Kuhwen to stop the rebellion was to release Abraxas. In other words, there was no future for the militia if they failed to recapture Tri-Force. They had to use every type of method to regain the Holy Land.

'But they gave up too fast. Even if 40% of their power is wiped out, that is still sufficient for Kuhwen to send them to capture Tri-Force. Yet they still ran away....'

Nemet raised his head and shouted.

"Scouts, send the Fly Rangers to search every corner!"

Dozens of Fly Rangers flew through the desert at Nemet's command. After 10 minutes, Nemet was able to confirm his hunch.

"There is an ambush prepared about 3 kilometres behind those sand dunes!"

".....That's right."

A smile formed on Nemet's mouth.

The 3D image showed 100 soldiers hiding behind the sand dunes. There was also a small body with a cloak wrapped around the face.

The cloth made the face hard to see but he could easily guess who it was. A small physique was mixed in among the burly physiques of all the other soldiers. Nemet knew of only one person in the militia who would have such a physique!

"Prince Kuhwen, he is using petty tricks."

Now Nemet was able to understand the situation. The militia gave up attacking and ran away as a lure. Prince Kuhwen was hiding among the soldiers behind the sand dunes. While the militia was luring Nemet, Kuhwen would try to enter Tri-Force. Nemet admired the strategy once he grasped it.

"If it was any other leader then perhaps they would be fooled. But I, Nemet am different from everyone else. Prince Kuhwen, your greatest misfortune is meeting me here. I'm sorry but I'm going to use you as a stepping stool for my rise."

Nemet turned and shouted.

"Hajas, I will give you 3,000 troops. Chase the militia and wipe them out immediately. And all the remaining troops will follow me. Hurry. We have to slaughter them!"

While the main unit entered the desert, Nemet led a smaller force to the sand dunes. But there was one thing Nemet hadn't noticed. Hundreds of bodies were scattered on the field from the battle just then. There was a red viscous liquid like gum on the ground.

And.....

-A strategy to lure them.

Hawk said just before the attack.

-The troops stationed at Tri-Force outnumber us by 5 times. We are also lacking time. It is impossible for us to deal with those numbers. But it is different if we trying to allow Prince Kuhwen to enter Tri-Force.

-So the conclusion is a luring strategy?

-Are there any other strategies?

-No. The thought just made me annoyed.

-I'm also annoyed hearing it.

Hawk gave Ark an unpleasant look.

-Whoa! Whoa! Relax. We still have to fight a war. Now isn't the time for us to be fighting. I agree about the luring strategy. But as with all strategies, it will be no use if the opponent isn't fooled.

-Are you saying I can't deceive properly?

-I don't mean that. You're definitely good at lying. You made the factions strike against each other and hid the self-destruct mechanism on the grey planet from me. You're a gifted guy in that respect. I guarantee that. Excellent.

Ark gave a thumbs up while talking. Then Hawk smiled while clenching his swords.

-Aha! Yes, I understand now. Let's end this here.

-No, I'm talking seriously. Anyway, if you made up your mind then you can get away with scheming. But this battle doesn't just have lives at stake. Our spaceships might be lost. So shouldn't there be a safety device?

—What do you want to say?

—You might now know this but I'm also an expert at tricking people. In my experience, people think they are cleverer than they are. And those guys have a habit of searching deeply. So I'm talking about a hidden answer.

Hawk nodded after Ark's words and replied.

—If they start doubting then the answer is to hid something in a key spot.

—You understand. It is the right answer.

—I know what you're saying. It is better to trick the people on that side. The problem remaining is where to hide it. —Is there a place you're considering?

-There is.

Ark smiled and nodded.

—Darkness is hidden under the light. Do you know what that means?

The darkness under the light that Ark spoke about.....

Shake, shake.

While Nemet was leading his troops. The red liquid on the ground of the battlefield suddenly rose and one person emerged.

The person was Ark! Ark used the new skill from the Myutal DNA 'Hide' in order to move across the battlefield unnoticed.

'For the time being, it seems like the enemy leader Nemet has been tricked.....'

"Ah, you! Who are you?"

"The enemy!"

‘....Just like I expected.’

Nemet hadn’t left Tri-Force empty. He had left 100 soldiers and 2 Sphinx behind. And Ark had appeared in front of them. An ‘!’ floated above the heads of the soldiers as Ark suddenly popped up on the battlefield.

Pajijijik! Pajijijik!

And the moment the plasma bullets were fired!

“Come out, Shire! Rune Carving, Hwairam!”

Ark’s hand moved through the light and formed a complex pattern. In the next moment, the rune formed the shape of a giant foot and hit the ground.

Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

There was a roaring sound as the ground shook. The sudden shaking caused the enemy to lose their balance and stumble.

“Come out, Shire! Rune Carving, Kuem Radon!”

Meanwhile Ark had drawn a new rune without any delay. A light shot up from the rune like fireworks and formed a giant eye in the sky. At the same time, a small window showing the battlefield appeared in Ark’s vision. Kuem Radon was a scouting skill that allowed him to observe the surrounding area. The piercing eye glanced around Tri-Force from the sky.

‘Now there are only 100 soldiers remaining at Tri-Force. And I can’t see it from the bottom but there are two snipers hiding in the upper part of the pyramid. It will be difficult if I’m under attack from the enemy sniper without any cover.’

“There is one on the right hand side in the 3 o’clock direction with a height of 20 metres! Another at the same height on the left hand side at 7 o’clock!”

Tutung! Tutung! Tutung!

Ark pointed to the locations and yelled. The sound of gunfire continuously rang out from between the corpses on the battlefield. He could confirm the result with the Kuem Radon eye.

Ark saw blood flying from the head of the snipers before falling down the slope of the pyramid. At that moment, Ark took out his sword and ran towards the enemy troops while shouting.

“That’s it! Everybody, strike with full force!”

It was at that moment. Ark rushed to the enemy lines. Sand rose up and dozens of soldiers appeared behind Ark. The two people that ran out first were Slayer and Basak who were holding huge shields.

“Hyung-nim is always next to Basak! Iron Wall!”

“Damn, if you speak first then it is like I’m imitating you! Iron Wall!”

Basak and Slayer used Iron Wall at the same time and a small fortress was formed. The plasma shots pouring towards Ark were stopped by the shields while Kurakan, Rapid and Kaya started shooting the enemy.

Meanwhile Sadain, Ellain and the rest of the team approached. They attacked the enemy troops stationed at Tri-Force like a thunderbolt.

“Ugh! W-we were tricked!”

“These guys, they didn’t run away at all!”

The enemy burst out after receiving a surprise attack out of the blue. But Ark and his team that popped out of the sand only numbered 15 people. On the other hand, Nemet had left 100 troops stationed at Tri-Force. The enemy quickly regained their stability.

“There are only 15 of them! We can handle them immediately!”

‘That’s what they think....’

Ark grinned and laughed at the enemy. Dozens of sand pillars suddenly welled up behind the enemy troops. 50 soldiers were revealed after the sand pillars soared up. And the man at the head of the soldiers was Hawk!

This was the last stage of the operation that Ark and Hawk developed. Once again, the difference between the power of the militia and the rebel army was 5 times. It was 5,000 to 1,000. Ark and Hawk weren't foolish enough to have a frontal confrontation with such a large power difference.

So they considered a luring strategy. They used camouflage to lose the main Tri-Force army. The issue was how to conceal the troops from Nemet's eye in the desert.

The problem was settled surprisingly easily.

-Kuahahaha. The militia, they're not my opponent!

Nemet declared with high spirits after the previous battle. Only dozens of minutes had passed and approximately 400 people had been killed in the militia. But that was Nemet's mistake.

No, it was more accurate to say that Nemet was tricked. It was impossible to guess the number of enemies that fell down on the battlefield. The easiest way to check the power difference was to make a head count of the soldiers still fighting. This was the part that Ark and Hawk aimed at.

–Reduce our number while fighting?

–Of course they would think we were dead.

–Yes, there is no special terrain to hide out troops here. If the number decreases then naturally the enemy would think that they are dead. The commander might think that an ambush is planned but he would never expect

us to be hiding right there at the front.

—If there is a way to hide there....

—There is a way.

Ark smiled and replied.

It was digging! While Hawk was fighting intensely and caught Nemet's eye, Ark was working at the rear. In the early stages of the battle, he had poured water over the sand and had people dig! Dig! Dig!

People dug places in a few places. Then soldiers would hide in the pit with a shield above them and they were covered with corpses and sand. The militia sequentially disappeared so Nemet judged that he was winning. But there were only approximately 300 militia soldiers killed.

Ark's team, Hawk's team and 70 militia had hidden in the sand.

—But there is no guarantee that the enemy will chase after the militia.

—That's right. So we will throw a bait.

—Prince Kuhwen?

—There is no better lure to the rebel army than the Prince. Their mission is to desperately defend Tri-Force. There is no reason for them to chase us if we retreat. Those guys will win if they keep defending Tri-Force. But if they pursue Kuhwen then they won't protect Tri-Force. That will be a chance for victory.

This was Ark and Hawk's plan. And Nemet took the bait in front of him. He thought that Kuhwen's party only consisted of 100 soldiers.

Of course, Kuhwen wasn't actually used as bait. The person Nemet regarded as Kuhwen was actually Tori wearing a cloak since his body shape resembled Kuhwen. The actual Kuhwen was hiding under the sand with Hawk and Ark. This was the Unclear Lamp operation!

“Hiding in the sand....”

“Dammit! Tricked again! We’re surrounded by them!”

“There is no need to panic! There are still only 60~70 of them!”

“We also have the Sphinxes! Sphinxes, those guys....”

Fushu! Pepepepeng!

Before the enemy could finish, a column of flame shot up from the Sphinx. Hawk’s lieutenant Harley was kneeling and aiming a tank destroyer that he had fired at the Sphinx.

Ark learnt that Harley was a NPC that specialized in hijacking and destroying tanks. But there was also a user in Ark’s team who specialized in tanks.

“Park, the remaining Sphinx is left to you!”

“Okay! Leave it to me! I am the original professional autobot controller! Go Car, Kum!”

The dinosaur and autobot forms rushed towards the Sphinx. The autobots were a weapon specializing in fighting tanks. The autobots had high defense and their armoured attack meant they would deal more damage than general users. And the general enemies.....

“Khafra Fencing 3rd style! Galaxy Sword!”

Ark threw his body towards the enemies. Dozens of swords swirled out and shredded the enemy. And Rapid rushed to the centre behind Ark. Rapid’s pistol revolved like a spin top and fired all over the place. The revolving pistol was Rapid’s specialty.

Tang! Tang! Tang!

The gun seemed to be firing wildly but every shot hit an enemy! The bullets

flew all over the place and passed through the enemy's forehead.

Kurakan's M-620 also shone in this battle. The hit rate wasn't accurate in a 1 on 1 battle but the machine gun could wreak havoc in a wide battle like this. Its strongest use was the random shots!

Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu!

"Wuhahaha! Take this! Take this! Take this!"

Kurakan exclaimed with a satisfied expression.

The enemy was busy trying to escape the hail of bullets. However there was no place to flee to. Hawk's team had created a battle formation. While Ark's team was charging, Hawk's team members were attacking from behind.

100 against 70. The enemy still had the advantage in numbers but numbers already meant nothing. Once Ark and Hawk simultaneously attacked from two fronts, the enemy rushed back and forth as their formation collapsed. The one sided disadvantage had been wiped out.

While Ark and Hawk took care of the troops, Harley and Park took care of the two Sphinxes. The time it took was only 10 minutes!

'Certainly....'

Ark glanced at Hawk.

Hawk had done a dazzling job when fighting against Nemet's main army. But Hawk hadn't shown 100% of his power then. There was no reason for him to do his best when they had the luring strategy in mind.

But in this battle they needed to exterminate the enemy as quickly as possible. Now Ark could see the true combat power of Hawk and only a sigh emerged.

'Hawk had more subordinates and his team is stronger than mine. I hired

Slayer and Kaya's team for a total of 6 users but there is a large difference. And he declared openly.....'

Unlike the first game, Ark had felt a little easy.

Ark had encountered Lucifer a few times. And the result of the fight against the Red Slaughterer, or Lucifer was enough for Ark to conclude that they had similar combat power. There was no reason for him to become hasty. But it was different when a strong user like Hawk was aiming at him. Now that Hawk had declared himself, he counted as an enemy along with Lucifer.

'I can't relax anymore. Hawk's power is enough to interfere and make it difficult to grow on the space frontier. I have reinforce my power base before the different becomes too large. I need to survive and become stronger.'

Ark once again became irritated. But this was a different time and space. If he failed the quest then he would lost the Silver Star and his growth. Ark turned his back to the enemy and shouted.

"Prince Kuhwen, now!"

Kuhwen exited the sand with Tot.

"Come out, Shire! On the order of a blood relative of Horus, break this seal....."

And he began to draw runes in front of the pyramid. This was the sacred rune passed down through the generations of Horus in order to open the doors of the Holy Land that contained the control device of Abraxas.

'This long quest will end now!'

Flash! Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

Then a light suddenly exploded from above the pyramid. Shock waves spread as an airship exploded. The player on the airship threw his body towards

Kuhwen while Ark and Hawk jumped in front of him without hesitation. At the same time smoke started to blow from the airship.

Kwa kwa kwa kwang! Kwa kwa kwa kwang! Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

“Sword Defense!”

“Flow Sword! Return! Bullet!”

The swords belonging to both of them scattered the bullets. But it was impossible for Ark and Hawk to stop all the bullets coming from the airship.

Ark embraced Kuhwen’s body and rolled to the ground as a few bullets hit him. At the same time, a black object fell where Kuhwen used to be and a huge sand pillar welled up. Ark and Kuhwen rolled several metres along the ground.

One man then jumped down onto the sand.

Basak grabbed his shield.

“Hyung-nim, it is dangerous!”

“A Casain dares interfere!”

A man wearing a black helmet yelled as his arms moved violently. Basak went flying like he was hit. Meanwhile Ark and Hawk raised their swords and stood in front of Kuhwen. The man stared at Kuhwen with red eyes after hitting Basak.

“I finally met you Prince Kuhwen.”

“Set....”

Kuhwen said with a moan.

-The Elite class leader of the rebel army ‘Set’ has appeared.

A red warning message floated in front of Ark at the same time.

Space 8: The Murat Saga (Part: 2)

SPACE 8. The MURAT SAGA (PART: 2)

“Set!”

Kuhwen ran forward and shouted.

“You were such a loyal subject so why did you commit such a terrible sin?”

“Loyal subject.....”

The sound of laughter emerged from Set’s voice.

“Yes, loyal subject. I once believed so as well. I was a loyal subject of Horus. I worked to protect Horus and ensure peace on Muratio Star. I never doubted the mission that the Great God gave me.”

“Then why?”

“Because I realized that I was mistaken.”

Set raised his voice and continued.

“I heard the voice of God. And I came to know. The Great God doesn’t want peace. Destruction! And death! That is what the God wants.”

“Nonsense! Who would hope for such a thing?”

“Your Majesty, there is no point.”

Then Tot shook his head and spoke from the rear. He looked at Set with incredulous eyes and moaned.

“I don’t feel any light within Set anymore. The only thing swirling inside him is a dark aura. The force of the dark aura is so incredible it is hard to believe. I

don't know when the darkness entered Set's body but his heart has already been swallowed by the darkness. He already can't be convinced with words."

"Indeed Tot. You understand."

Set laughed while scratching his head and replied.

"But you misunderstood an important part. The dark aura didn't enter me. I embraced the dark aura. That's because I recognized the true will of God. Your expression says you can't understand. It is natural. No one can understand unless they heard the voice of the Great God directly. But it isn't necessary to worry. I'll make sure you guys soon hear the voice of God. However, you will hear the voice of the death god."

Set dropped his shoulders and spoke quickly. At the same time, a small rod fell from his sleeve towards his hand. A black ray shot off from the rod at the same time. It was a black lightsaber.

"This guy is Set...."

Ark went out in front of Kuhwen.

"This crazy person. The voice of God? You should go to a mental asylum. There are many who had the voice of God like you. No, I'll send you there."

"Jed?"

Ark seemed to be someone called Jed in Set's eyes. But he had no intention of correcting that idea. Ark nodded blankly and Set laughed before continuing.

"I haven't seen you in a while but the guy who always hid behind Prince Kuhwen is now standing in front of him. It is worth understanding. That sword tells me that you are the Elim's Heir. Perhaps your confidence is coming from there. But it is better not to strain yourself. Haven't you heard? The late Elim was killed by me. Do you think that you who just became the heir can take care

of me when the formal Elim couldn't?"

"It is possible!"

Ark raised his lightsaber and shouted. Then Rapid and Hawk simultaneously rushed forward on either side of him. And in front was Ark! It was the attack from an alliance of three warriors!

"It is impossible for you guys! Right now I'm unbeatable!"

Set opened both arms and shouted.

A huge aura of darkness swirled around and focused on Set. Ark felt his breath clog and body stiffen as he was wrapped in the dark aura. Set slowly raised both arms and Ark's body floated into the sky like he was pulled by something.

It wasn't just Ark. Next to him was Basak, Hawk, Rapid, Kuhwen and Tot. The people around him were captured by an unseen force and floated up. At the same time an information window appeared.

-You have been captured by Set.

<The strong dark aura has blocked all movement from allies within 100 metres>

'Oh my god! I can't move? This is....'

Ark looked at the information window with astonishment. He knew that Set was the leader of the rebellion on Muratio Star. Ark had expected Set to be strong. But to not be able to move? Was this a problem of strength anymore?

"Huk! W-what is going on?"

“I don’t know but Hawk-nim is in danger!”

“Damn! Help Hyung-nim!”

Hawk and Ark’s team watching from afar started clamouring. No, they tried to jump up!

Pepeng-! Pepeng-! Pepeng-!

Sand pillars soared up between Ark and his team. The sand pillars exposed 100 soldiers wearing black armour. They were subordinates of Set who dropped down from the airship. Set looked at his subordinates before moving close to Ark and muttering.

“Didn’t I tell you? You aren’t my opponent.”

‘Is Set really a NPC?’

He looked at the approaching Set holding the black lightsaber.

This sometimes occurred in a game. A user’s ability couldn’t beat the NPC. Did this mean the <For the Benefit of Muratio Star!> quest needed to be completed before Set appeared? Did the appearance of Set mean a failure of the quest itself? There was a possibility that Set was a NPC that couldn’t be beat. Ark considered that point before shaking his head.

‘No, that is ridiculous! I thought I was killed when caught by the black hole! I worked hard over 3 days and now they’re saying ‘Huhuhu, Set can be beaten?’ Is this a joke? If I die here then it isn’t just experience and skills that will be lost. Even my spaceship will be lost! No! I will never die! I won’t let it end in vain like this! There must be another way!’

And there really was!

“You can’t stop us with such sorcery!”

There was a cry from the back and the black aura immediately scattered. The

unseen force around Ark, Hawk, Rapid, Basak and Kuhwen disappeared and they fell to the ground. Ark turned around at the sudden situation with an astonished expression and saw Tot floating in a meditation posture.

“I know the force! The powers of darkness won’t affect me!”

The one who invalidated Set’s skill was Tot!

He looked like Yoda but he had been no help in battle so far! He was the Elim mentor but only taught Ark Break Kinesis! Ark honestly hadn’t paid much attention until now! This was the famous Elim spiritual mentor! He was still a NPC.

But this scene clearly showed Tot’s skills.

“Ark, now! I’ll block this guy so accomplish the Elim’s mission!”

....In the end, it was a war between disciples. But fortunately Ark wasn’t alone right now!

“Basak, they are charging!”

Ark shot forward like a bullet the moment he landed on the ground and shouted.

At the same time, Set’s subordinates surrounding Kuhwen and Basak took out their weapons. There was the thunderous sound of gunshots as Ark and Hawk’s teammates conflicted with Set’s soldiers.

And Ark.....

Wiing! Wiing! Buoong!

A trajectory of light rushed towards Set. The moment the sword was about to reach Set!

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Sparks flew out continuously. Set had considerable sword skills. He was the leader of the troops on Muratio Star so it was natural but he managed to block dozens of sword attacks with one hand.

But this much was expected. The two swords violently collided with each other!

“Defense Break!”

Ark’s sword slipped towards Set’s wrist and struck. Defense Break was a technique to deal with the opponent’s defense stance! It was a useful skill in close combat. Set hadn’t expected it and a wide gap appeared in his posture.

“Take this!”

Ark’s sword went through Set’s neck without any delay. No, he thought it pierced through but Set’s body scattered like fog. And he appeared behind Ark as the black lightsaber fell vertically.

“It is still crude. Vacuum Wave!”

“Damn, Sonic Sword!”

Ark ducked and rolled his body. The black and blue swords collided in the air and there was an explosion of smoke. A huge impact that it Ark’s body. He reflexively strengthened the power in his leg but Ark still flew back several metres.

While Ark was driven into the sand, Set laughed and approached.

“Kukukuku! Didn’t I say it was impossible for you?”

“Your opponent is me!”

The sparkle of two swords plunged into Set. It was Hawk who had been waiting for a chance. Hawk wielded two swords like lightning and seemed to push back Set’s one sword. However Set pushed his leg deep into the sand and

turned his body, causing a circle of black light.

“Not a chance! Destruction Zone!”

Hawk raised his pair of swords with confusion. Black sparks continuously flew until Hawk was thrown back 10 metres. Rapid instantly fired his pistol when Hawk was pushed back after Ark.

“Continuous Fire! Quick Fire! Chain Fire!”

Tang! Tang! Tang! Tang!

The pistol revolved in Rapid’s hand and fired off successive bullets! But Set just waved his lightsaber from side to side and the bullets scattered everywhere like Ark’s Sword Defense. Rapid changed locations and rapidly fired the bullets. Set stretched out an arm towards Rapid and a black sphere formed on the palm.

“Air Bomb!”

The sphere moved forward at a speed that was impossible to see. Rapid used evasive behaviour but the sphere caught up to him like it was a guided missile and exploded. There was black smoke and the bloody Rapid fell to the ground. This happened in the few seconds that Ark was pushed back by the Vacuum Wave.

“U-unbelievable.....”

Ark stared at Set with a flustered expression. It wasn’t just Ark. Hawk who had been waiting for a good opportunity while Rapid was firing also had the same expression.

‘It’s different if I was careless. However Hawk and Rapid aren’t careless. Yet the 3 of us couldn’t face him directly?’

This was Galaxian but Ark was still a legendary gamer. His power was inferior to Hawk’s but he wouldn’t be pushed back in personal skills.

And Rapid was a rival that competed with Ark equally. He had a considerable physical obstacle but he overcame that weakness with a pistol. Hawk was one of the Seven Swords so there was no need to talk about his skills.

Yet Set had defeated 3 such users instantly. Tremendous skills!

'Impossible! It is impossible to defeat him with our abilities right now!'

Ark came to this conclusion. However he had no intention of giving up this fight.

'There is no reason to give up yet. Obviously Set is strong. It will be difficult to defeat him with my own power. And the other team members are fighting against Set's subordinates so they can't help. But I'm not alone. For me....'

Ark raised his body and looked at Hawk and Rapid. They were his former rivals Rapid and Hawk. Now these two rivals were next to Ark. No matter the problem, currently they were people with the same purpose. They couldn't match Set but that was when they were facing Set separately.

'If I team up with them....'

Anyway, it wasn't necessary to express such ideas. Ark could read the same idea in Rapid and Hawk the moment they made eye contact.

—That is the only way remaining!

Hawk reached the same conclusion as Ark. Ark, Hawk and Rapid's movements changed significantly since then. Ark moved forward to control Set's movements. Then Hawk and Rapid moved slowly behind Set.

Tang! Tang! Tang!

Rapid started shooting. 3 bullets flew accurately! These shots were a signal so Hawk and Ark rushed forward with their swords. Set felt like that atmosphere of the party had changed. Set's sword exploded towards Ark and Hawk like a wild

animal protecting himself. However Ark had already expected Set's response.

'Swamp Walking!'

Ark lowered his body and used Swamp Walking. Ark's upper body lowered enough until it almost touched the ground. And he kicked out the moment he was close to Set. But unlike New World, his kicks didn't have an effect in Galaxian. Moreover, Set was much higher levelled than Ark. His position was also enough to make Ark fall. And this attack revealed a gap in Set's posture!

'But this alone is enough!'

"Do you think I will accept this attack?"

Set turned towards Ark and twisted his sword. Hawk's sword twisted intricately and fell onto Set's head.

"One thousand. Flash! One thousand net!"

"Ugh! You!"

Kakakakak! Kakakakak!

Set flinched and sparks flew into the air as he blocked. Rapid then reloaded and fired towards Set's head. Set instantly spun his sword. At the same time a black vortex rose and pushed back Ark, Hawk and the bullets.

"Is this the capabilities of your group?"

Set's red eyes swept over Ark's group and he murmured in a threatening voice. Set had fended off Ark, Hawk and Rapid's continuous attacks by himself! But Ark wasn't disappointed. It wasn't successful but he was convinced with this attack.

'We can do it!'

Ark grasped his sword and looked at Hawk and Rapid. Once again Ark, Hawk

and Rapid couldn't handle Set alone. The only way to complete the request was for the 3 people to join forces and do a pincer attack.

When the 3 of them joined together, the attack damage wasn't x3. The important thing about the pincer attack was that they be in tune with each other. If they didn't fit then it would be rather annoying.

This attack was to check that out. Hawk and Rapid could attack in tune with him. He would give the result at least 8 points out of 10.

As soon as Ark tried a low attack and focused Set's eyes there, Hawk had attacked from the top. And when the two attacks failed, Rapid had fired to prevent Set from counterattacking. Anyway, it meant they knew the timing to attack without needing to speak!

'Then I don't need to hesitate any longer!'

Ark's sword swept the horizontal direction to vertical. Set shot forward like a bullet and a blue afterimage followed him. The sword poured towards him like a shower!

The blue and black swords intertwined complicatedly in the space between Set and Ark. The two swords were straining against each other when a sound was heard. The person who interrupted was Hawk!

Wiing! Wiing! Pajijik! Papang! Wiiing!

Sparks soared as Ark, Set and Hawk tangled together. Set skillfully swung his sword and received both Ark and Hawk's attacks. But it wasn't easy for Set to simultaneously block both swords. Set began to be pushed back as the contact between swords increased.

Tang! Tang! Tang!

Then bullets flew through the middle! Even in such a situation, Rapid wasn't

in a hurry. His location always changed and he would shoot to interrupt when Ark and Hawk was on the defensive. Ark and Hawk's swords plunged immediately when the attack was broken!

Ark attacked from below and Hawk from above! Hawk attacked from below and Ark from above!

The 3 swords relentlessly tangled with each other within a 1 metre space. This pincer movement was being done for the first time but they were perfectly in tune with each other.

“Trash like this.....!”

Set shouted angrily. But the circumstances meant that Set no longer had room to even talk.

Ark, Hawk and Rapid had reversed the situation with their pincer attack. The chances of Set's landslide victory changed from a ratio of 8 to 2 in a 1 on 1 battle had changed to 6 to 4. And Ark's attack speed became even quicker once Set started being pushed back.

“You flies. You will die today.”

Set became angry at Ark's provocation! The situation increasingly tilted to Ark's side as Set flared up. But the situation still wasn't over.

Ark, Hawk and Rapid had found a way to push Set back but the situation with Set's subordinates wasn't going well. The combined attacks from his subordinates were pushing the users back. And if the team members were killed then completing the quest would be difficult even if Set was taken care of!

Set grasped the situation and suddenly changed to defense.

“Ark, he is buying time!”

“I know! But switching to defense is as good as admitting defeat. And this is my specialty! Break Kinesis!”

Ark shouted and used his skill. The space behind Set’s head suddenly exploded.

It was the explosion of force Break Kinesis! He had tested it a few times after learning from Tot but unfortunately Break Kinesis couldn’t be used directly against monsters and NPCs. But it was possible to explode a space with nothing in it. The explosion wouldn’t deal a lot of damage but it was enough to break the flow of the offense.

“Khafra Fencing 3rd style! Galaxy Sword!”

Ark used his strongest skill Galaxy Sword after the explosion! Swords flew forward like a fan. It wound around Set like a storm. Set’s health dropped by a tremendous amount and he flew back several metres.

“Light Wave! Wide Sharp Swords!”

“Chain Fire!”

Kwa kwa kwa kwa! Tatatatang!

Hawk and Rapid also used deadly skills.

‘That’s it! Now there is a chance to win!’

Ark lost his breath as he looked at Set.

Set had been gradually overwhelmed once Hawk and Rapid joined in with the pincer movement. Ark and Set’s health was 45% to 38%. It wasn’t enough to guarantee a victory. But the recent attacks reduced Set’s health by 8% to 30%. It was 45% against 30%!

‘Now we can definitely win!’

Ark was convinced of victory and was preparing for the next attack.

Suddenly he had a strange feeling. He felt a sense of discomfort after Set was hit by Galaxy Sword. It was only after Kuhwen's scream that Ark knew the source of his uneasiness.

"T-Tot!"

Ark's face stiffened as he turned his head. Tot who was floating 10 metres in the air in a meditation posture had a black lightsaber through his chest. This was the uneasiness Ark felt!

Set's sword wasn't in his hand. Set had distracted Ark and his companions. Set was looking for a chance to aim at Tot while fighting Ark. And the moment Ark's group used a knockdown technique, he had driven his sword through Tot's chest.

The reason Set did such a thing was simple. If Tot disappeared....

"Your tricks end here."

Set murmured with a laugh and took one step forward. He spread an aura of darkness and once again wound around Ark's party.

Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu!

Bullets hailed all over the place. Dozens of people became bloody and fell down from the concentration of bullets. But that wasn't the end. Plasma bullets burnt and swords were stabbed through bodies as people died.

"Ugh, dammit!"

A man groaned and moved backwards.

He was Paragon, a member of Hawk's troops who Harley had placed in charge of the militia. His mission was to take the militia and lure Nemet's main army.

And he had succeeded in luring Nemet's main force.

But it wasn't possible to outrun the enemy in the desert. They were caught by the 3,000 rebel army soon after succeeding in the luring strategy. However Paragon wasn't daunted.

'I expected that we would be caught by them. The important thing is that Captain Hawk and the remaining team reaches Tri-Force safely. Once Kuhwen entered the pyramid and released Abraxas then the battle will end. The space fleet will enter Muratio Star. We have to hold on until then!'

He was sure that victory was secured. But the scheduled time had passed yet there wasn't any change in Tri-Force.

He assumed it would be a short term battle but 20 minutes had passed since it started and it was still being drawn out. That expectation meant the tactic was for a short term battle and now the soldiers in the defense line were reaching their limit. They were holding up but it was clear the defense line would soon collapse.

'No! Just a bit more!'

Paragon bit his lip as he stared at the pyramid.

'Captain Hawk, what is he doing?'

The militia was on the brink of destruction.

Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu!

Gunshots rang out a few kilometres away.

The 1,000 rebel army led by Nemet was running while firing plasma bullets. The 100 soldiers that Nemet had discovered with the Fly Ranger were running away. Based on the configuration of troops, Kuhwen's unit should've been

wiped out already. And there were indeed only 50 soldiers left after being caught by Nemet's unit.

But Nemet felt sick while carrying out the one-sided attack.

“Damn! Why aren’t any of the attacks hitting?”

Nemet growled as he looked at the flapping cloak that was Kuhwen running away. It had been dozens of minutes since catching the militia yet Kuhwen hadn’t been hit by any of the bullets.

That was because Nemet was still unaware of something.

Kuhwen who showed incredible evasion! The man moving in front of Nemet was not Kuhwen. Kuhwen was currently in front of the pyramid and the disguised person was the pet hamster (?) Tori! Tori had no battle skills but his evasion and ability to escape from a crisis was equal to Ark despite being a NPC. But that was Tori’s own ability.

“Catch him! Kill! Kill him!”

Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu! Tu tu tu tu!

Nemet became even more upset by Tori’s ability and the unit members died one after another. Unfortunately Tori couldn’t hide and just ran around escaping from the shower of bullets. There were shields on either side of him but it was only a matter of time until Tori died!

‘That damn Ark! What is going on? I’m going to die!’

Anger burned inside of Tori.

At that moment, Ark and Hawk....

-You have been captured by Set.

<The strong dark aura has blocked all movement from allies within 100 metres>

“D-dammit!”

.....They were wrapped in darkness and floated in the air.

“Kukukuku. Now it is like you are hanging from a spider web. Didn’t I tell you? You guys are not my opponents. This has proved my point. I will shred your body for all the trouble you gave me.”

Set approached Ark and slowly said. Then Ark raised his head, looked at Hawk and shouted.

“W-wait a minute! Why me? Think about it! That guy hit you harder than I did! Don’t you remember? If you have to kill someone then kill him!”

“This bastard....”

Hawk yelled angrily.

“No! The person who thought of this strategy first is him! Ark!”

“What? This bastard! No! The first person who talked about a luring strategy was you! How can one of the Seven Swords act so cowardly? Wouldn’t your subordinates be embarrassed?”

“You’re the one who started it!”

“I just told the truth! You were the one always talking! Isn’t it better for him to hit you? Hey Set. Think about it. This is an important issue!”

.....They were both trying to persuade Set to kill each other first. Fortunately that didn’t last long.

“Ugh! H-Hyung-nim! No! This bastard, kill me instead!”

Kuhwen and Basak were also floating in the air beside Tot. Set made a pitying expression after seeing the atmosphere and clicked his tongue.

“Ha! Their subordinates are a lot better than their masters.”

Ark and Hawk blushed.

“Pathetic. I had to fight against trash like you. But now your tricks will end. And you both don’t have to fight. All of you will die like squashed bugs. A volunteer has appeared so he will be killed but Jed will be first. That way I can see Kuhwen and Tot crying as well.”

Despite Basak’s efforts, it was decided that Ark would become the first fatality!

“Basak, don’t worry. It will be your turn next.”

Set approached Ark and stretched his arm out. Set’s sword that was driven into Tot’s chest returned to him. It was Psychokinesis. Set used that technique to pull his sword out of Tot’s chest.

“Now it is time for your punishment. Vacuum Wave!”

The sword plunged downwards.

“H-Hyung-nim!”

Basak screamed as Ark’s chest was split open. However Ark was feeling more despair than pain. This quest was 99% a failure. If he was hit by Set and died then all the experience and skills he gained during the three days and the Silver Star would be lost.

But there was no longer any way for Ark to stop it. He was incapacitated and couldn’t move so all he could do was wait for death. Ark could only look desperately.

-Ark, do you hear my voice?

He suddenly heard a humming voice in his head.

“T-Tot-nim?”

-Yes, that's me. I'm speaking to your spirit directly using force. Where did your spirit go? You're just letting yourself be hit!

Tot snapped in an angry voice.

.....He was using force to speak to others in a situation like this? It was slightly outrageous but Tot's words weren't.

-Ah, no. I've received a fatal wound and can no longer prevent the dark forces. If this continues then Kuhwen will be killed as well. Then no one will be able to stop Set. If Set controls Muratio Star then he will bring war to the universe. Right now you are the only person who can stop Set.

“But I can't move.”

-No, it is possible if it is you. The power that I used to stop the dark forces isn't special. You know the strength of Force. You can use Psychokinesis and Break Kinesis. In other words, you have received two things. You will soon realize the power of that attribute. Now I'll align with your force and tell you how to concentrate your mind. This is the only chance. If this fails then you will surely die.

“Eh? Eh? No, wait a minute! My heart isn't prepared....”

Ark spoke with a puzzled expression.

-Tot's skill has started!

Tot has connected to your spirit using the power of

Force and fused Psychokinesis and Break Kinesis to create a new skill.

But Tot's current state means he can only open the two types of power. The fusion of the two types of power will depend on your concentration. If you can blend the two powers together perfectly then the skill will be created.

There is only one chance! If successful, a new skill will be acquired but if you fail then the two powers will flow backwards and explode.

The keyword is 'Force.'

The blue information window rose!

At the same time, a large disc appeared. And two small beads started to roll inside it. Ark figured out how to create the skill the moment he saw the beads. There was a black and white bead. They probably signified Psychokinesis and Break Kinesis. And the keyword meant that he needed to use Force to join the 2 balls.

In other words, it was some sort of mini-game. However it was a superficial game like the name. There was only one chance and failure would mean death. His experience, skills and the Silver Star would fly away. A game with his life at stake!

'But this is too much!'

Ark lost his fighting spirit as soon as he saw the beads. The beads were rolling too quickly on the disc. Furthermore, the thought of losing everything placed a considerable burden on him and he couldn't concentrate on the beads.

—What are you doing Ark? The two powers have already clashed a few times. But why are you just watching from the sidelines? Hurry! There is no time! You will die if you don't succeed so just do it!

‘Die? If it fails then won’t I explode? Yet he told me to just do it? Damn! What is this? Aren’t you a mentor?’

Tot was just talking without knowing the other person’s feelings.

“Wuhahaha! How about it? Do you feel like you’re gradually dying?”

There was a crazy person in front of him still cutting away. He couldn’t concentrate directly.

But like Tot said, Ark had no time.

If he failed to fuse the forces then he would be killed but if he didn’t then he would be murdered by Set! Fortunately Set was going slowly but Ark’s health had already decreased to 30%. Set only needed 3~4 hits before he would hear the voice of the death god.

‘I need to concentrate! Just once! I have to bet everything at once!’

Ark closed his eyes and breathed deeply.

Anyway, it wasn’t useful to have many thoughts in this situation. There was only one chance. If he concentrated his mind then he could quickly beat the game. He waited until he couldn’t even feel the pain from Set’s strikes before opening his eyes.

“Eh? Ehhhhh?”

Ark’s eyes were shocked. He wasn’t concentrating so hard that he couldn’t

feel the pain from Set's attacks. Set wasn't attacking. Instead both hands were forming black spheres.

"You're tougher than I thought. It is troublesome so I'm going to take care of you!"

It seemed to be an attack that would send Ark to his death. However the beads had crashed a few times and moved around the outskirts of the disk.

"W-wait a minute! My mind isn't prepared....wait a minute! It went well until now! So be a bit more patient! Haven't I stirred your emotions? So enjoy yourself a bit more!"

"Shut up and go to hell! Electric Air Bomb....."

Ark's persistent persuasion didn't mean anything to Set. No, when Set was about to attack.

"Aaaaaack! Hyung-nim! No! Sacrifice!"

Basak suddenly screamed and beat his body. At that moment, an amazing thing happened. Basak's body started to change to crystal. No, to be exact a crystal shield on Basak started to encroach on his body. And when Basak's body was completed covered....

"C-crystal golem?"

Kukung!

Basak who had been floating in the sky changed to a crystal golem and fell down. Set was confused by the unexpected situation and the black sphere hit Basak. However Basak's movement as a crystal golem was faster.

The crystal golem slammed both arms on the floor and sharp points exploded towards Set. Set hurriedly wielded his sword.

Syu syu syu syu! Pepeng!

“Cough!”

There was a ringing sound as Set protected his face. At the same time, the black sphere was shoved in the crystal golem’s shoulder. The shoulder area exploded but the golem’s body was made of crystal. He only wobbled for a bit but running over to Set and swinging his fist.

Set was unprepared for this. However, Set soon arranged his posture to strike back. At first he was surprised by the abrupt situation but the crystal golem started to push Set back.

In fact, Ark was also panicked like Set. He couldn’t understand the situation in front of him. But this chance wouldn’t come to Ark twice! Many questions floated in Ark’s mind but he desperately looked at the beads on the disc.

And the moment the beads encountered each other! Ark raised his head and exclaimed.

“Force Explosion!”

Pepepepeng! Pepepepeng! Pepepepeng!

Ark focused his spirit and spread it out as an intangible chain.

-A new skill (Occupation Restricted ☆☆☆☆☆) has been learnt.

Force Explosion (Users, Active): The collision of Psychokinesis and Break Kinesis is an advanced force skill that will cause an explosion of pure energy. There is no physical damage in Force Explosion. However, the burst of pure energy will exclude all evil

forces surrounding it. Force Explosion will debuff everything caused by the power of darkness. The effect will last for 3 minutes.

<The powers of darkness will be debuffed for 3 minutes>

Force consumption: 200

“I-It’s a success!”

Ark landed on the floor and shouted. The advanced skill Force Explosion was exercised at last. The golem that was fighting Set suddenly split apart and wound around Ark’s arm.

-The Divine Artefact ‘Baius Shield’ has been equipped!

The message then surfaced. The Baius Shield was coiled around Ark’s arm. But in contrast to its previous form, the crystal was now wrapped from his shoulders to his wrist.

“B-Baius Shield?” But Basak? Where is Basak.....?”

-I have already died.

A distance voice was heard inside his head.

-This Baius Shield has been handed down through generations of the Casain tribe. But this isn’t a crystal that has will. To be precise it is a crystal that can hold will. And the will contained in the Baius crystal belongs to the elders of the Casain. The Guardians born in the Casain tribe will die to serve and the shield

will grow stronger depending on their willingness to serve. It is due to my ancestors' will that I could help Hyung-nim.

That is the reason why my will could dwell inside here.

I can help Hyung-nim from in here. The price of this is that I will soon blend in with my ancestors and lose my own self. But even if I lose myself, my willpower will act with my ancestors in order to protect Hyung-nim.

Ark was lost for words. Basak had given his life for Ark. The crystallization on Ark's arm was proof of his loyalty. When he considered this point, this was probably the precursor to the Elim gaining the Baius Shield!

'Does that mean it is an already scheduled event?'

Ark thought up to there. The shield unrolled and there was a strong explosion of light.

-The superior skill 'Ra's Glory' has been cast!

+ Health has been restored by 30%

+ Attack and defense has increased by 20%.

+ Attack Speed has increased by 25%.

+ 25% of all damage will be blocked by the shield and returned to the enemy.

The message floated due to the huge buff. In fact, Ark had expected a lot from a Divine Artefact and had been disappointed when he found the Baius Shield.

The shield's performance wasn't that large and the golem wasn't a help either. The truly valuable part of the Baius Shield was that it could grow with experience.

But that message took away his worries. Health recovered by 30%! Attack and damage increased by 20% and attack speed by 25%. The shield also blocked 25% of all damage and returned it to the enemy! The shield's skill showed the effect of 3~4 Esper's buffs.

Of course, this was a skill triggered by an event. But it was likely that the Baius Shield would contain unique skills. If the level rose then he could acquire skills and these skills alone were worth investing experience in it. Anyway!

“Kuoh! H-how are you doing that?”

Ark had used Force Explosion to regain his footing. The aftermath of this meant that Set had stumbled for a moment. He then belatedly confirmed that Ark was free and stuttered.

Ark only had one thing to say at this point.

“Justice is the way to win.”

“Shut up! Justice is based on the will of the God that I follow!”

Set growled with anger and raised his lightsaber. A black swirl was produced by the lightsaber and flew towards Ark. No, just as it was about to fly. Gunfire was heard from the other side.

Tang! Tang! Tang!

Once Ark had released the dark aura, Rapid had immediately started firing. Set had to avoid the bullets. Across from Rapid, Hawk was staring at Ark with an unpleasant expression before shouting.

“Dammit! It can't be helped. Awakening skill, Open Eye!”

Kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa!

Hawk shouted while lifting his eye patch. A red eye appeared and a massive light exploded from it. A chain explosion then occurred in the air! The chain explosion swept passed like a tsunami until only soot marks were left.

‘What? That guy, he was hiding that skill?’

Ark’s mouth dropped open at the immense skill. But now wasn’t the time to be surprised. Basak’s sacrifice had won a hard-earned opportunity! If he missed this opportunity, there was no guarantee they could beat Set.

“Ugh! These lowly fellows....”

Ark’s body shot forward like a bullet towards the blackened Set. Set swung his sword dozens of times in an intricate pattern. In the past, he couldn’t go against Set in a 1 on 1 fight but the circumstances changed once the buff was applied.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Ark’s sword moved at a dazzling speed and blocked the black sword. He received an impact with the shield and Set stumbled. The buff effect returned 25% of the damage to the enemy. Ark approached the wobbly Set and laughed.

“What did you say? Now it’s my turn?

“W-wait a minute!”

“You didn’t wait previously. This is the definition of ruthlessness!”

Wiing! Wiing! Wiing! Wiing!

Ark’s lightsaber started to wave in a complicated pattern.

The light moved dozens of times and became more complicated. Of course this was due to the increase in attack speed from the buff. But it was only possible to tell for someone who often played online games. It was 25% extra

attack speed but it actually felt like 2 or 3 times the normal speed.

Ark strove to prevent Set from attacking. Set's health had already been decreased to 30%. Basak then turned into a crystal golem and attacked. Then combined with Rapid and Hawk's offensives, his health reached 15%.

On the other hand, Ark had 30% health left but it recovered by 30% due to the Baius Shield buff. Currently he had 60%. The combat power was similar but there was 4 the difference when comparing health.

But fighting spirit was the crucial difference from before. It was a situation where Ark had been on the verge of death and was suddenly revived. On the other hand, Set had been on the verge of victory only to be cornered. It was impossible to stay calm in such a situation. Ark's shower of attacks reduced Set's health to 3% and Set fell to the ground.

“W-wait a minute! S-save me! I-I.....”

“It is too late! Khafra Fencing 3rd style! Galaxy Sword!”

Dozens of swords flew forward like a fan.

They surrounded Set and there were sparks as the swords kept on striking. Then there was a crack on the armour of Set's leg before gradually climbing upwards like a breaking pillar.

Tong-!

Once the crack reached the head, there was a ringing sound and the helmet flew off. Black shadows then sprang out from the helmet and surrounded Set's head.

-Kuaaaak!

Set held his face and screamed through the shadows! Red eyes stared at Ark from among the shadows. Ark quickly lifted his shield as an unidentified

presence appeared.

He was nervous at the possibility of the battle continuing. However the shadow with red eyes just yelled with fury before disappearing.

—You! Jed! Elim! I will never forget this grudge!

“.....What was that? That guy?”

He waited longer but nothing further happened.

-Your level has risen.

-Your level has risen.

And the ringing sound of continuous messages! He disposed of Set and this was converted into experience. But there was no time to relax yet. Set was killed but Ark and Hawk's team were still engaged with Set's subordinates. Ark jumped up and shouted.

“Stop! Set is dead! Everybody surrender!”

“Dammit! Leader Set....”

“The rebellion was a failure?”

“No! We just need to kill them!”

“We're going to die anyway! Let's get revenge for Set!”

The rebels became enraged and fired their plasma bullets. Ark used Sword Defense to deflect the plasma bullets' trajectory and moved towards Kuhwen.

“Damn! Your Majesty, Tri-Force!”

“Stop Prince Kuhwen!”

The surviving enemy rushed to the pyramid.

Then an enemy collapsed to the ground due to Ark's sword. Another body fell down on the other side while three bullets penetrated a different enemy. They were Ark, Hawk and Rapid who killed Set.

"Come as much as you want. I will kill everyone. Awakening skill, Open Eye!"

Flash! Kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa!

A red light flew from Hawk. The chain explosion occurred in a radial blast! The enemies caught in the explosion had their health decreased and some even instantly disappeared.

"Continuous Fire! Quick Fire! Chain Fire!"

Tang! Tang! Tang! Tang!

Rapid spun his pistol and bullets penetrated the enemy. And dozens of swords extended towards the enemy line!

"Khafra Fencing 3rd style! Galaxy Sword!"

Dozens of enemies collapsed under the combined attacks of Ark, Rapid and Hawk. Even the team members were helping. Their morale was already at the bottom so quite a few enemy troops couldn't resist and collapsed. However these rebels were desperate. No, the uprising had failed so their deaths were confirmed anyway.

Kwa kwa kwa kwang! Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

There was also the bombardment of the airship from above. It really was a plan of desperation. Everyone was going to die so they gave everything they had. But Ark's team had a user who could oppose the bombardment. The controller Park!

"Car! Kum! Transformed into the final form!

The dinosaur form opened up parts of its leg and other areas at Park's

command. Then the knight form got on it and transformed into a long spear.

The two autobots had transformed into a type of turret!

“If an airship is the opponent then it is my specialty!”

Kwa kwa kwa kwang! Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

Park got on the turret and a spear of energy shot out from it.

Indeed a tank expert!

Kaya and Sadain were good in hand to hand combat but Park showed his mighty power against tanks. Fortunately there was Ark, Hawk and Rapid. Along with the team members, they managed to interrupt Set's troops while Kuhwen called the Shire to open the entrance of the pyramid.

Ku ku ku ku! Ku ku ku ku! Ku ku ku ku!

Many people were feeling anxious. Suddenly the earth shook and a huge red pattern formed on the pyramid. The pattern formed an ‘x’! At first he had no idea what this meant. But he knew once the pattern changed. It became a blue ‘o’ pattern.

‘Perhaps that is....?’

Ark looked up with hopeful eyes. A huge space gate had formed above the pyramid. Sparks flew around the gate before a huge spaceship passed through.

The airship that was exchanging hits with Park turned towards the spaceship and fired. But when looking at the scale of the spaceship, it was like sticking a needle in an elephant. The offensive of the spaceship.....

Flash!

A blue light flew from the spaceship and the airship dissolved without a trace. Meanwhile dozens more gates had formed over the spaceship. And hundreds of spaceships similar to the one that destroyed the airship filled the sky.

That's right. What explanation was needed? The pyramid was the boundary between space and Muratio Star. So 'x' meant no entry while 'o' meant it was okay to enter....

The atmosphere became lighter with one pattern.

Anyway, the ward Abraxas protecting Muratio Star was turned off. The space fleet spread throughout the galaxy could now enter Muratio Star to suppress the rebels.

"Waaaaahhhh! Murat space fleet! We did it!"

"That's it. Now....."

The militia cheered. Tot who was leaning against the pyramid wall gasped and slowly closed his eyes.

At that time.

—Kuoh....

An ancient temple somewhere in the galaxy. A black form occupying the centre groaned and grabbed his face. The robed men in the vicinity flocked with confused expressions.

"What's wrong?"

—It is nothing.

The black form answered in a thin, tremulous voice.

—I was just reminded of nasty wounds that occurred a long time ago.

A red mark was engraved on the forehead of the black form. However, a black hand rubbed it and the red mark immediately disappeared.

—This bruise from the past isn't anything special....

The black form frowned before continuing to speak.

-I don't know why but I'm in an unpleasant mood. I need to hurry. Tell Fenrir to put things in order and return.

Space 9: Back to the Future

SPACE 9. Back to the Future

“You cowardly wretch!”

Ellain shouted angrily.

“I still think my loyalty to Ark-nim is deeper than yours. Yet....yet....if you’re not here then how can I win? Cowardly bastard! Stupid bastard! Ugh, you....you....really....”

And he couldn’t continue talking through his dripping tears. Ellain was embracing the crystal golem. Ellain and Basak had been in a competition over Ark but Basak sacrificed his body and turned into the crystal golem.

In fact, the person who was most attached was Ellain. They hadn’t even met each other for one day but they were always arguing.

Yet Ark’s battle with Set ended, the Baius Shield returned to what it was when he found it on Rakunka. The Baius Shield had probably only reached the previous level because of Basak’s remaining will. Basak’s will mixed in with the ancestors and the Baius Shield reset to its initial state. Of course, the crystal golem’s memory was also reset.

—What? You? Why are you spreading your runny nose on my body? Can’t you just fall?

Despite Ellain’s tears and runny nose, the reaction of the crystal golem was cold. Well, it was sad in its own way.....

There was another sad thing. The Elim’s spiritual mentor who had been with Ark through this whole journey, Tot. After the battle against Set, Tot was found

unconscious next to the pyramid and still hadn't regained consciousness.

"It seems that Set's dark force has rooted itself in his heart and it seems impossible that he can regain his consciousness. But Tot has devoted his life to being the Elim's spiritual mentor. His body can't recover due to the dark force but his spirit is protected by a powerful force of light. That is Tot's will. I will accept Tot's will and move his spirit to a new container so that he can be revered as an Elim mentor in the future."

That was Kuhwen's explanation. In the end, Basak and Tot. The two people Ark first met when arriving on Muratio Star had sacrificed them to end the rebellion.

Basak joined with the Baius Shield. And Tot's spirit would live in another form, but anyway! Set's rebellion was ended. And.....

"Here....!"

Ark looked down with admiration.

The only city Ark saw on Muratio Star was Minaheim where he met Kuhwen. Minaheim might be called a city but it was only at the standard of a village. There were small scale machinery and hamlets that was at the level of a medieval village.

Thus he thought the other villages on Muratio Star were similar to it. But the city spread out below him got rid of such preconceptions. Skyscrapers and a huge pyramid stretched out for dozens of kilometres on the horizon. And a crowd that was difficult to guess the number could be seen in the distance.

This was the capital city of Muratio Star that flourished in the past, Hwangdo. Once the space fleet entered Muratio Star, they quickly cleared up the rebellion. The rebel army was strong enough to take over most of Muratio Star's major cities but they were no match for the space fleet.

The rebel commanders knew this better than anyone so they surrendered as soon as they knew the space fleet had entered. Some rebels resisted until the end by they were smashed by the space fleet. And Kuhwen and Ark's companions unabashedly took a space ship to Hwangdo!

“Your Majesty, the coronation preparations have finished.”

“I understand. Start.”

Kuhwen nodded his head. Kuhwen and Ark's party descended towards a deck where the Pharaohs had gathered in the centre of Hwangdo.

“Wahhhh! Prince Kuhwen!”

“Pharaohs from all over the galaxy!”

“They are the humans who helped Prince Kuhwen defeat Set! The leading role in suppressing the rebellion!”

“Hooray Prince Kuhwen! Hooray Pharaohs! Hooray the militia!”

The crowd in Hwangdo cheered as Kuhwen, Ark's party and the Pharaohs appeared on giant floating screens. Kuhwen waited for the cheers to die down before beginning to talk.

“The faithful residents of Muratio Star, I know you have been anxious about this undesirable situation. However the Great Gods Ra, Shu and Tefnut never abandoned us. Darkness is always present in this world but the darkness is unable to beat the light. Set's rebellion has been ended by those here! And I, Kuhwen as the new Horus declare that peace has come to Muratio Star!”

It was just after the rebellion so the coronation procedure was simple. Each of the Pharaohs had to swear allegiance to Kuhwen.

“It is thanks to you.”

Once Kuhwen formally became Horus, he turned to Ark, Hawk and the others.

"If I didn't have your help then it wouldn't be possible for me to stop Set's rebellion. You don't belong to the Murat yet you were still involved in the swirl of war. This praise isn't enough. This is lacking comparing to your achievements but accept my small token of appreciation."

'Ooh! A reward?'

Ark's eyes started shining. Kuhwen praised him to the people but as expected, he still gave compensation to the users. The compliments were nice but it couldn't even be used to wipe his mouth.

In that sense, it was great the Kuhwen's coronation ended quickly so he could receive the compensation. Soldiers approached with a pyramid the size of a box after Kuhwen finished talking. The Murat items Ark found in ruins had also been packed in a pyramid.

Once again, the amount of achievements also applied to this quest. The rewards were granted in the order of achievements. And of course, the person with the most merit was Ark who defeated the rebel leader Set.

Kuhwen turned to Ark and spoke.

"If it wasn't for your courage and efforts then Set wouldn't have been stopped. The Murat will bestow this upon you as praise for your courage and effort."

Ark received a single rod from the pyramid.

-Equalizer (Unique)

Item Type: Lightsaber

Wearer Restriction: Level 120, Exclusive

Attack: 75~80 Durability: 120/120

The Murat are a peaceful pioneering species dedicated to spreading civilization to other planets in the galaxy.

But that doesn't mean there is no danger to the pioneering Murat. The universe is full of hostile species and space pirates that surpass imagination. Thus the pioneering Murat had developed more powerful weapons than those used on Muratio Star.

This is a lightsaber made by a master craftsman that is given to the Pharaoh in charge of the Murat space fleet. The Pharaohs are those who spread Horus' mission for peace through the galaxy. Thus the sword was called Equalizer. But in contrast to the peaceful name, it has a sharpness that can cut anything and a ferocious energy. The makers emphasized durability above anything else and the sword can be used even after thousands of years have passed.

<Strength +15, Agility +10, Attack Speed +18%>

<Special Option (Berserker): A massive

consumption of mana (force) will be consumed to increase the effectiveness of all skills by 50% for 10 minutes.

Force consumption: 1,000

Cool down time: 4 hours>

‘Rare lightsaber!’

Ark’s mouth gaped open. The last sword he received was the Heir’s Sword after changing professions. But the Heir’s Sword wasn’t that awful compared to the level 120 sword he just received.

The Heir’s Sword was 65~70 while Equalizer was 75~80. There was only a 10 point difference. Heir’s Sword added 20 points to states while Equalizer was only 15 and 10. It actually fell instead. However the attack speed was 8% higher.

An additional ability was added to cover the stats that fell! The Heir’s Sword had the special option to increase recovery speed while Equalizer raised all skill effects by 50%! It consumed 1,000 Force and only lasted for 10 minutes but the rise in combat option was terrific. But there was a separate reason why Ark was happy.

‘I can still use this after thousands of years?’

Once again, Ark wasn’t in his original time and space. If he returned to his original world then there was a chance any items obtained here would disappear. Of course, the probability of it disappearing in the future was low but there was a chance it wouldn’t work anymore. Yet the Equalizer had a ‘thousand year warranty’ attached to it. It was packed with confidence.

'But.....'

Ark turned around with an uncomfortable expression. He didn't like that Hawk also receive a similar level of compensation. Ark could see Hawk receiving a pair of unique beam daggers! The thought of Hawk receiving similar compensation to himself caused a stomach-ache. Ark couldn't rejoice at the sight of Hawk receiving a unique pair of daggers.

'Yes, doesn't he have a lot of money?'

He really couldn't like that guy. Anyway, the other members of the main team also received weapons. Of course, they didn't receive unique weapons like Ark and Hawk. Most of the equipment wasn't different from their original world. Kuhwen was sorry so he gave extra gifts to a few members. That was.....

"I was a useless baggage who just watched. You are more skilled with the pistol than any Murat I know. I can't allow you to remain a nameless gunner. I will personally bestow the title of Saint Gunner."

Kuhwen said this to Rapid.

-Your subordinate Aram has changed occupations to
<Saint Gunner>.

A Saint Gunner is a specialized profession among the Ranger series.

They can't wear heavy armour so strength is low but they have high stamina and hit rate. Once changed to Saint Gunner, a considerable bonus will be given to pistol related skills and a new pistol

related skill can be learnt.

This is a specialized profession so there will be a penalty when using other guns.

<Strength +5, Agility +35, Stamina +5, Wisdom +10, Intelligence +20, Luck +35>

The information window that popped up in front of Ark! Kuhwen had gifted a magic item and a profession. So far Rapid had been unemployed with no profession. Galaxian was a game with no profession training centre and it wasn't necessary to find a profession compared to a decent body coating.

Of course, a profession wasn't required. Whether it was a user or NPC, the basic path of a warrior, engineer or esper was decided by the body coating. It acted like a profession so there was no problem with the growth of a character. However, Rapid just received profession related stat bonuses and profession related skills. It was required but not required. That was a profession in Galaxian. And now Rapid had received a profession.

Of course, this wasn't limited to Rapid. It was the same for users like Kurakan and even NPCs.

-Your subordinate Kurakan has changed professions to a <Heavy Gunner>.

-Your subordinate Ellain has changed professions to a <Sword Extremer>.

-Your subordinate Berad has changed professions to a <Destructor>.....

Ark's employees changed professions! Change profession! Change profession! Professions had also been given during the quest. Surprisingly that was Ferguson, A and B. Ferguson, A and B were users with similar levels to Ark. He had reached the 18th rank with no profession.

Of course Ferguson, A and B were given professions. As the quest progressed and Kuhwen was protected, they were given the profession of Bodyguards! They had a steady body from now on thanks to Kuhwen's consideration. However Kuhwen was forced to worry one last time.

"Then....um...."

The person Kuhwen was worrying about was Tori. Tori about been near Kuhwen since the time they left Minaheim. However he couldn't think of what compensation to give Tori. He didn't fight the enemy like the other team members nor did he protect Kuhwen with his body like the 3 monkey brothers.

From the beginning Tori had been hiding somewhere safe until he had to play Kuhwen. Kuhwen couldn't easily think of a profession to give the hamster. But the smart Kuhwen soon found the answer.

"I understand that you're not a common person. You have a great knowledge of machines. This knowledge will surely help Ark in the future. Polish up that knowledge as I give you the title of Professor."

The feeling of being forced to give something out....

-Your subordinate Tori has changed professions to a <Professor>.

A Professor is someone that specializes in knowledge like mechanical engineering, biotechnology etc.

Engineers are people who have received special body coatings and can't wear armour.

However they can control tanks and spaceship and if the necessary materials are prepared then they can repair and reconstruct. In addition, if there is sufficient time for research then they can develop new items.

A Profession is an occupation given to those with several top rated engineering skills.

<Strength +5, Agility +5, Stamina +5, Wisdom +40, Intelligence +40, Luck +20>

Anyway, even Tori changed professions! It was the same for Hawk's subordinates.....

"Now, the people of Murat! Cheer the heroes who saved Muratio Star!"

Kuhwen shouted after giving out the free gifts. Then hundreds of Pharaohs lined up on both sides simultaneously raised their white lightsabers. Hundreds of spaceships floated overhead also saluted with their guns.

Pepepepeng! Pepepepeng! Pepepepeng!

The long and short Murat quest ended. However, the most important issue to Ark remained.

“Here.”

Shortly after the end of the coronation. Kuhwen spoke to Ark’s party from the castle.

“I’ve thought a lot about it after hearing your words. How do I send you back to your original time? But the technology of the Murat still hasn’t found a way to surpass time and space. Then I remembered this.”

Kuhwen indicated towards a machine. Ark looked at the machine and asked with a frown.

“Isn’t this a machine that preserves a person’s DNA?”

A revival machine. A Fairy. The machine Kuhwen showed was bigger than the Fairy Ark was used to but the overall shape was the same. Kuhwen asked Ark with a surprised expression.

“You know it? No, yes, you originally came from the future. It wouldn’t be strange for such a this machine to exist hundreds or thousands of years later.”

Kuhwen nodded and continued talking.

“That’s right. There isn’t an official name but this is a machine to that can preserve a person’s body information. Many Murat mourned those lost from accidents or attacks after entering the universe so this machine was created. This circular device will revive that life. Once this machine is complete, there will be no more people dying in the galaxy. Then all unnecessary disputes in the galaxy will disappear.”

It was a mistake. The pioneers in the future became more excited at the thought of not dying and caused more wars. But there was no need to talk about such a dismal future. Who knows? Kuhwen plans for the Fairy might be able to stop this development. Then the future might really change like a sci-fi movie.

Anyway!

-You have acquired undisclosed information about the ancient alien species called the Murat.

The universe has a long history and many alien civilizations have grown and declined.

Finding undisclosed information can help illuminate the history of the universe. Hidden alien artefacts or technology can play a decisive role.

<You've learned from Prince Kuhwen that the Murat was the one who first created the revival system the Fairy>

+ Information about the ancient alien species Murat (5/15).

+ You have obtained 300 Adventure points for acquiring information about the Murat.

+ You have gained 5 Intelligence for acquiring

information about the Murat.

Once again, the information window emerged when he discovered new information. It had showed up when he heard about the Shire and the rebellion. He had already obtained 3 pieces of information. And his Intelligence rose rapidly with each addition. It wasn't enjoyable like the other rewards but it was something that Hawk didn't receive.

"But what does this have to do with returning to our original time and space?"

"As I said, we don't have any technology to send you to a different time or space. But it is different when talking about the future of this city. We can move through time but not space. And this is an equipment to preserve DNA information. However this isn't the final form of the machine. Rather than copying the DNA, it actually absorbs the soul. Only an empty shell would be left behind. The soul is preserved until it is revived so it is basically like dying."

This was one of the reasons why the Fairy couldn't be used yet. But Ark's companions could use it to return to their original time and space.

"This device won't help anyone of this world but it will help you go to the future. Your spirit will be preserved by the machine until your body is recycled in your original time and it would be like you just did spatial movement."

This was the method Kuhwen thought of to return Ark to his original time. The Fairy would wake them up thousands of years later. They wouldn't really be sent through thousands of years.

Let's not misunderstand. This was still a game world. The time they went to sleep would probably be only a short while. They would close their eyes and open it in their original time. In addition, Tori and Ellain weren't pioneers but

they could use this Fairy.

Their body would be absorbed by the Fairy and then the machine would spit them out. Anyway, it was lucky for Ark that he could take the 2 non pioneers. But there was still one problem.

The reason Ark's party entered this world was because they had been sucked in by a black hole. So if they appeared in the same place thousands of years later then they might wake up in the black hole. Escaping the black hole would be a different matter.

Kuhwen nodded after hearing Ark's worries.

"I already know this. And I understand that Muratio Star's solar system is currently dying. Perhaps that is the reason why you connected to this time and space. We haven't grasped the exact structure of a black hole but we know it is caused by the death of a planet. Perhaps the black hole connected by Muratio Star's system dying and the one you fell into connected and formed a space time tunnel. My hypothesis is that you will wake up thousands of years later in this village inside the black hole."

"Then.....?"

"Unfortunately I can't precisely answer your question. We've never experienced such a thing before. But we have thousands of years. So I promise. I will definitely find a way for you to escape from the black hole before you wake up."

If a NPC said so then there would be no problems. And Ark had no choice even if Kuhwen couldn't find a way.

"We just need to register on the Fairy?"

Then Hawk stepped towards the Fairy. Kuhwen hesitated for a while before

sighing and looking at Ark.

“Ark, you’ve really done a lot for me. I’ve also learnt a lot. I wish that you could stay near me but that isn’t possible.”

“I’m really sorry.”

“I know. This isn’t your world. And if you stay in this world then my real friend Jed won’t return. If you leave then at least you’ll be alive even if I can’t see you anymore. It is regrettable but it can’t be helped. Can I have a token for my memories?”

This was the first time a NPC requested an item from him. If it was any other NPC then he would punch them. But Ark felt the same way about Kuhwen. He had only spent 4 days on Muratio Star. The time wasn’t long but Kuhwen believed in Ark and followed him the whole time. The thought of not being able to see him again made him upset. Ark also had many japtém in his bag at the moment. Quite a bit of loot dropped while battling in this world.

‘Well there is no guarantee that I can eat anything....’

There was no security the items would remain after thousands of years. Ark decided to be generous and handed over a piece of armour. After finishing the goodbyes and preparations, they headed towards the Fairy.

“Now, let’s go!”

Ark’s party each touched the Fairy in turn. Hawk registered at the Fairy first and his body disappeared as his soul was absorbed. Then Hawk’s empty body that was left collapsed to the ground. Following him was Ferguson, A and B. And the team members in turn became hollow shells.

“Goodbye.....”

And finally Ark touched the Fairy. Light shot out before his empty body fell

down. But unlike the other people, Ark's body soon saw up again with a confused expression. Kuhwen who had been looking silently at the Fairy turned around and asked.

"Jed?"

"P-Prince, where am I? Set? No, I.....?"

"I'll explain it slowly. There is a lot to talk about."

Kuhwen smiled and replied.

Character Information Window

| | | | |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Name | Ark (R-02788) | Level | 143 |
| Species | Human | Occupation | Elim's Heir |
| Fame | 11,730 | Adventure | 2,490 |
| Health | 3,450 (+275) | Mental Power | 725 (+440) |
| Mana | 0 | Force | 1,825 |
| Strength | 340 (+30) | Agility | 395 (+61) |
| Stamina | 575 (+55) | Wisdom | 40 (+13) |
| Intelligence | 375 (+68) | Luck | 55 (+8) |
| Leadership | 10 | <small>* Title</small> | |

Cleaning Foreman (Agility + 3)

Ignorant Destroyer (Wisdom -10, Strength +7, Stamina +7)

Beltana's Hero (Strength, Agility, Stamina, Wisdom, Intelligence, Luck +3)

Athamas' Hero (Strength, Agility, Stamina, Wisdom, Intelligence, Luck +5)

Mediator (Wisdom, Intelligence +15)

* Contribution: Galactic Federation 19,520, Aschulat 500

* Affiliation: Dark Eden (CEO)

*Body Coating: Survivor

+ Environmental adaptation increases by 50% due to the Survivor coating.

+ The Survivor coating reduces the drop rate of Satiety by 30%.

+ The Survivor coating will reduce fall damage by 50%.

+The 'Clairvoyance' effect of the Survivor coating is applied.

-Equipment Information Window-

Weapons:<Equalizer (Strength +15, Agility +10, Attack Speed +18%)>

Armour: <Hide Helmet (Camouflage function)>

<Baius Shield (Stamina +20, Resistance to energy weapons +50%, Golem summoning)>,

<Harkenion Armour (Agility +10, 10% melee damage mitigation)>

<Belphégor's Pants (Stamina +20, Agility +20, King's Wrath)>

<Pioneer's Footwear (Environmental damage reduced by 20%)>

Jewellery: <Sheraton's Twilight (Intelligence +45)>, <Hot Wind Ring (Fire resistance +30%, Agility +10)>

Accessories: <Charenjok's Token: Lv 2>, <Cheksun's Toolbox>, <Recovery Ampoule>, <Battle Suit-Hyper Drone: Lv 2>

“Everything is returned!”

Ark cheered with joy. This was the room where Kuhwen had made them register the Fairy. He just felt dizzy for a few minutes before everything brightened again. Then he once again woke up in the same room.

However the atmosphere was completely different. Cobwebs covered the interior and there was a thick layer of dust on the furniture left behind. It was like thousands of years had passed....no, thousands of years had actually passed.

The first thing Ark did upon waking up was check the character and equipment information window. Fortunately all his equipment before arriving on Muratio Star had returned. It meant he safely returned to his original time and space. He also retained his quest reward the Equalizer and the items he found in his backpack.

“Damn, I should've given something a little cheaper....”

That armour that Ark gave Kuhwen would now be valuable. But that bus had already left. And he couldn't pay attention to that now.

“At least it is certain that I've returned to my original time and space. But a problem is still remaining. This is still Muratio Star despite it being thousands of years later. That means I'm inside a black hole. I can't feel relaxed until I leave his black hole.”

He was impatient just thinking about it.

He had returned to his original place but now he had something else to worry

about. He couldn't afford to think about it in the past but Ark had called Irina. Irina had been attacked by the Rama after Ark, Hawk and Ferguson entered the black hole. Fortunately Irina prevented the extinction of the investigation team so the situation was good.

"By the way, where are Hawk and the others?"

Ark muttered as he closed the information window. Hawk, Ferguson and his team had been absorbed by the Fairy first but Ark couldn't see them. But it wasn't hard to find where they went.

Dust was piled in this stone room. Dozens of footsteps stamped in the dust led out of the stone room. Ark followed the footsteps and was soon able to find Hawk, Ferguson and his party. It wasn't just Hawk, Ferguson and his party.

"Hyung-nim, the Silver Star!"

A team member shouted as they saw Ark. Hawk and Ferguson were in a large square at the castle. Hawk's Death Knight, Ferguson's ship and Ark's Silver Star was located there. This ensured that one problem was solved.

"Now the remaining problem....."

When Ark had entered the square, Hawk and Ferguson were looking up at the sky. That was why Ark also looked up at the sky. Once again, this was the same castle on Muratio Star where they touched the Fairy.

It was the castle in Hwangdo. Thousands of years ago, it had been a large city with hundreds of thousands of Murat but now only devastation was left. The sky of Hwangdo was wrapped in a veil of light similar to an aurora. Hawk and his companions were looking at the veil of light.

"What is that?"

Hawk frowned before coldly replying to Ark.

“Who knows. But it seems to be a dimensional wall. It is generated by the black hole in the Muratio Star solar system and the one we entered....”

“Is it impossible to leave?”

“I tried. But the light veil blocked me and I couldn’t advance anymore.”

“This guy, you tried to leave by yourself?”

“Are we friends that I would stick around for you?”

“No. I don’t like you.”

“I’m glad. Then I don’t need to feel any remorse about stopping your breathing. But now’s not the time. The truce shall remain until the investigation team is dissolved. Because our purpose is the same. Though you should be careful and watch your back.”

“Back to you.”

Ark gave a short answer and turned around. He wanted to say a few words but there was no time to waste. And Ark already guessed where the clue to escape this place would be.

‘Kuhwen promised to find a way to send us through this dimensional wall. If Kuhwen kept his promise then there will be only one place.’

It was the throne room in the castle. While the remaining people stayed in front of the Silver Star, Ark headed to the room alone. There was a mural depicted in the hallway that Ark walked along.

A young man was kneeling in front of a small boy in a village and standing next to him were hamster and monkey alien species. The mural showed a progression of events like a panorama. Dozens of soldiers crossing the desert with a young man and boy, then engaged in battle with giant ants and a war in front of a giant pyramid. And finally the boy shedding tears when the young

man left.

The youth who left was Ark. The boy shedding tears was Kuhwen. That's right. The mural showed Ark's experience on Muratio Star. Ark was real thousands of years ago but now it was just a myth to the Murat. And Ark opened the door on the opposite side of the painting showing him leaving Kuhwen.

"T-this is.....?"

Ark flinched and stopped moving. Beyond the door was a spacious hall. This was the Hall of Horus. But the hall wasn't filled with Pharaohs. Yet there was a person wearing a crown who sat on the throne.

His form....

"P-Perhaps?"

There was a lengthy sentence recorded behind the throne.

–My friend Ark.

I will have probably become a mummy by the time you get here.

There are various worrisome parts so I'll explain it first. After you left, I began working on migrating the Murat out of this solar system. We found a planet that could be terraformed and migrated millions of Murat there, fortunately without any problems.

But it took too much time. When the work ended, I was already an old man at the end of my life.

It is true that you start thinking back on your life once you become old. My age reminds me of you even more. Our time together was short but it was an adventure of a lifetime for me so I've always been thinking about it. Thus I decided to transfer the Horus status to a child and come here to wait for the end.

To meet you at the end.

“This mummy is indeed Kuhwen.....”

Ark sighed and looked at the mummy. The mummy had a white beard that was the remaining traces of the old Kuhwen.

But I didn't remain here just to meet you.

You have crossed time and space due to a black hole. In other words, you can't escape Muratio Star even if you wake up thousands of years in the future.

As promised, I've set aside a way to escape the black hole.

I've set the coordinates to form a spatial gate. I decided to leave you something.

The switch attached to the left armrest will operate the machine.

Ark, you will soon be able to return to the place you desire.

Kuhwen stayed here to keep his promise. Of course Ark knew this. The mural painted in the hallway was just a fraction of Kuhwen's life. Kuhwen's appearance was that of a child. But feelings surged inside him at the sight of Kuhwen as a mummy.

“A peaceful death.....”

Ark lightly touched the mummy as he spoke. The mummy turned into sand as he touched it. At the same time, the beautiful armour the mummy was wearing fell with a clang. Dust fell off the armour as it glistened with a beautiful blue light. Then he found a phrase that had been recorded behind the mummy.

I will return your token of friendship.

I wish for your best fortune.

-Kuhwen.

"Token of friendship? Then this is?"

Ark picked up the piece of armour.

-Kuhwen's Chestpiece (Artefact)

Item Type: Light Armour (Upper Garment) Wearer

Restriction: Elim's Heir

Defense: 100 Durability: 100/100

This armour is a gift that Horus Kuhwen received as a token of friendship thousands of years ago.

It is a common armour seen anywhere but Kuhwen also wore it due to it being a token of friendship. At the time, the armour Kuhwen received as a gift was ordinary and the defense so paltry that it was like nothing was being worn. Thus Kuhwen improved the armour at the Pharaohs' strong requests.

They believed it was necessary for Kuhwen to have strong protection after Set's uprising so the Elim produced several items. They made the Divine Artefacts using the same process as the Baius Shield. Five different pieces were created and Kuhwen used the armour piece. It wasn't widely known about why

Kuhwen wore this armour. Maybe Kuhwen knew that in the future an Elim would visit.

<Strength +30, Agility +30, Stamina +30>

<Special Option (Ankh): Ankh is a symbol that represents life, health, truth and a good harvest. It is also the seal that shows the authority of Horus.

Kuhwen directly engraved this rune along with the Shire into the armour, granting an incredible increase to the wearer's health.

Health will recover by 2,000 (Force consumption: 500

Cool down time: 10 hours)>

-You have acquired <Kuhwen's Chestpiece>.

Ark felt like he had been hit in the back of the head.

'Oh my god! In the end I received back the item that I gave? Then Kuhwen asking me for the item was an event to upgrade it?'

It was surprising. He never imagined an event like this would be triggered. The surprising thing wasn't just the item.

After Ark obtained the Baius Shield, he grasped the places where the other Divine Artefacts were hidden from the crystal golem. However he was forced to

participate in the investigation team and then sent to another time and space. No, he already came back to the original time but never thought he would obtain a Divine Artefact from a different quest.

Therefore Ark was a bit confused.

‘Aren’t the Divine Artefacts passed down through generations of Elim? This armour being left here means the Elim didn’t use it. And why is this armour included as a Divine Artefact? In addition, the armour upgraded was the one he gave Kuhwen. Then what would happen if he had given other items? Would the Divine Artefact change? Or would it still use some excuse to become armour?’

There were several unanswered mysteries.

But Ark didn’t worry about it for long. He couldn’t discover the answer now. If he finished the mission with the investigation team and found another Divine Artefact then he would discover the answer.

‘Above all....’

Ark picked up the armour and laughed. He hadn’t expected to obtain another Divine Artefact. His unease over Hawk receiving the same compensation as him had now disappeared. Because acquiring the Divine Artefact had more value!

After equipping the armour, Ark operated the device.

Ku ku ku ku! Ku ku ku ku! Ku ku ku ku!

Then the king’s castle started to vibrate. The spatial gate producing device that Kuhwen described began to work. Ark left the Horus Hall and saw a pillar of light shooting out from the pyramid. And stars started appearing the moment the light touched the sky. A tunnel was formed through the dimensional wall to the universe.

Ark returned to the square where the team members were waiting.

“Hyung-nim, the dimensional wall has been pierced!”

“I know. Everybody board the Silver Star.”

Ark led his team members to the Silver Star and shouted.

“Tori, start the Silver Star! Go through the dimensional tunnel and return to our universe!”

“Understood! Silver Star engine operation! Start!”

Hwaaaaack! Hwaaaaack! Hwaaaaack!

Almost at the same time, Hawk’s Death Knight and Ferguson’s spaceship flew into the sky. And they entered into the tunnel across dimensions.

-You have escaped from a black hole and gained the title <Spatial Breakthrough>!

Even in an era where many pioneers are exploring the galaxy, many unanswered mysteries still exist. Among them is the black hole that sucks in everything. You still don’t know the secret of the black hole. However you have managed to escape alive from the black hole when no one else has. This achievement will inevitably make you a legend among pioneers. In addition, your experience can help find the secrets of the black hole.

<Title Effects: Spatial Breakthrough (All stats +10)>

+ You have gained an additional 8,000 Fame.

+ You have acquired 1,000 victory points.

A title that gave 10 points to all stats! It was a present at the end of his long spatial trip.

“There are still no special movements?”

-Yes, not yet.

“Surely this is....did I make a mistake?”

A sigh flowed from Irina’s mouth. Then Mario who was floating on the screen shook his head and spoke.

–Not at all. Then there is no other way. If Irina-nim didn’t do this then we would have been wiped out. The other members know that as well. None of the members blame Irina-nim for this situation. I can guarantee that. We are committed to Irina-nim.

“I thought like that as well but.....”

Irina looked at the universe through the window. Irina’s ship was situation near a giant black hole. It was the black hole that sucked in Ark and Hawk. And it had already been 4 days since they disappeared into the black hole.

Yet Irina and the team members hadn’t left the black hole. They weren’t waiting for Ark and Hawk. 20 ships were floating 10,000 kilometres away from the black hole.

These spaceships belonged to the Rama’s space fleet. Shortly after Ark, Hawk and Ferguson entered the black hole, Irina and the other members had received

a surprise attack. At that time, Irina and the other members had received considerable damage. If there was a fleet battle then they couldn't avoid being wiped out.

They managed to escape this crisis with Irina's help.

'Our fleet has already lost considerable power due to the enemy's attack. It would be suicide to advance in front of the Rama fleet. But it is more difficult to run away.'

Then a novel strategy popped into Irina's head. The ships belonging to the investigation team moved to the border of the black hole.

The black hole had a powerful gravity field that sucked in everything. Lasers and missiles were no exception. Irina moved the ships to the border of the black hole so any attack by the Rama fleet was sucked up by it. The black hole unexpectedly played an absolute shield role.

Irina thought she had avoided the crisis at this point.

'That's it. The Rama's attack couldn't connect with them anymore due to the black hole. Close combat fighting is impossible in this situation. It also isn't possible for them to approach or they would be sucked in by the black hole. Eventually those guys handing around here will be forced to give up and resign.'

But the Rama fleet didn't leave. They started setting up camp near the black hole. Now Irina couldn't move due to the Rama fleet. If they moved then they would be immediately wiped out by the Rama bombardment.

And the situation became more complicated two days ago. All of a sudden, the Aschulat's investigation team showed up at the black hole.

Presently the Aschulat and Galactic Federation had a twisted alliance agreement. But that didn't apply on the frontier. Furthermore, the investigation

teams were all trying to obtain information about antimatter first so there was no reason for the Aschulat to help them against the Rama.

And the Aschulat didn't pass by. They took the fact that the Galactic Federation and Rama being here meant that information about antimatter was hidden in the vicinity. And the Rama fleet was seeking that opportunity to attack Irina's fleet. Thus the three investigation teams remained in deadlock.

'This state can't continue for another few days. I need to find another way....'

Irina grumbled with a sigh.

Pajijik!

Sparks suddenly occurred at the centre of the 3 opposing powers. At the same time, Hajin who was in the cockpit burst out.

"There is an energy reaction ahead! It is a high density energy! Furthermore, the wavelength of the energy....oh my god! Antimatter! That is the wavelength of antimatter!"

"A-antimatter? Why is there such a thing here?"

Irina stood up and asked again. The space warped and 3 spaceships suddenly sprang out. The first one that appeared was Hawk's Death Knight. It was followed by Ferguson's ship and then finally....

"Eh? Eh? Eh? What is this?"

Ark looked around with bewilderment from inside the Silver Star. As soon as Ark, Hawk and Ferguson escaped the black hole, they had been surrounded by 3 fleets. This was an unexpected development! It was an unexpected crisis.

At the same time.

"Eh? Eh? Eh? What is this?"

Ark's confusion was linked to Hyun-woo in reality. Someone was knocking outside the capsule.

"Hey! Hey, you! Kim Hyun-woo! Are you home now? I know that you are here so open the door. Do you know what a hard time I've been having? Do you know how many times I've called you? Do you want to live? I will give you a few minutes to open the door. Eh? Aren't you replying?"

The person yelling was Lee Myung-ryong.

This was also an unexpected development. A major crisis.

TO BE CONTINUED